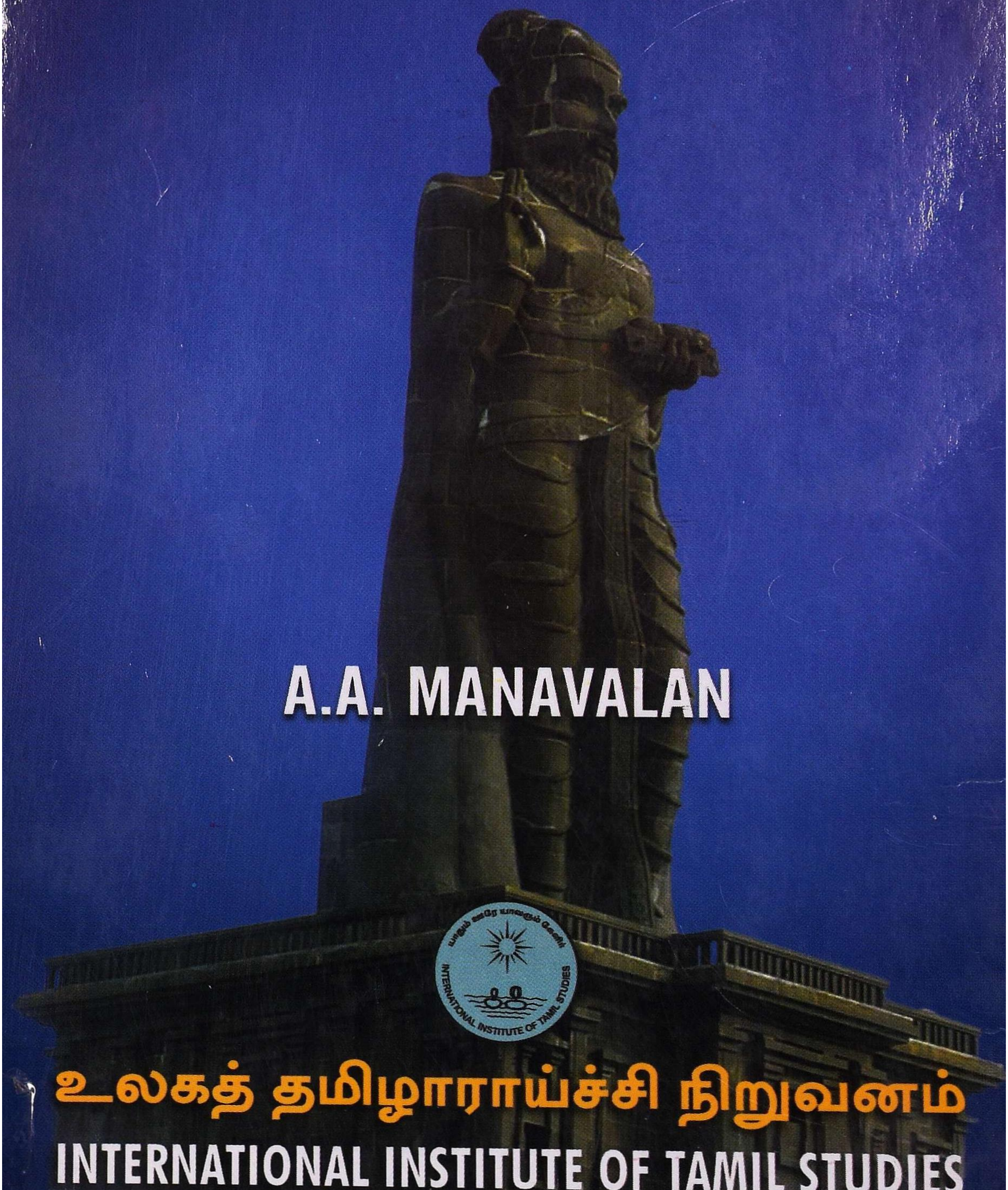
ESSAYS AND TRIBUTES ON TIRUKKURAL

(1886 - 1986 AD)



A.A. MANAVALAN

உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவனம்

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES

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இரண்டாம் முதன்மைச் சாலை

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FOREWORD

One of the primary objectives of the International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai, is to disseminate Tamil thoughts and scholarship among International audience. In that line of thought, I am pleased to pen this foreword to Prof. A.A. Manavalan's **Essays and Tributes on Tirukkural (1886-1986 AD)** which is a seminal contribution to the world of Thirukkural scholarship.

Prof. A.A. Manavalan has contributed a lot to Tamil Studies with his eminent scholarship. He has also rendered many texts from English to Tamil. His contributions are laudable.

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi took matchless efforts to erect a monumental statue of Ayyan Thiruvalluvar at Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu. His service to Tamil community through this effort is a feather in the cap of Tamilnadu. The statue of Thiruvalluvar speaks a lot about the glory of Thirukkural.

This compilation has the following essays:

1. The sacred Kurral of Tiruvalluva Nayanar, 2. The Ethics of Kural, 3. The Kural (J. Lazarus), 4. The Kural (V.V.S. Aiyar), 5. Thiruvalluvar, 6. Critical Studies in Kural, 7. Social Ethics in the Tirukkural, 8. Tirukkural, 9. The political philosophy of Tiruvalluvar, 10. The Tirukkural and the Greek Ethical Thought, 11. Philosophy of

Tiruvalluvar, 12. Truth as Depicted in Tiruvalluvar and Kabir, 13. Didactic Teachings of Tiruvalluvar and Guru Nanak, 14. Tirukkural and its unique place in Indian Literature, 15. Tamil Literature, 16. Concept of kingship in Kural and Epics, 17. Thiruvalluvar - As I see Him & 18. Tributes to Tirukkural

This compilation is an emblem of ancient classical language, culture, art and thought and I am sure this compilation is yet another diamond in Tamil Studies in general and Thirukkural Studies in particular.

I sincerely thank our **Hon'ble Chief Minister Dr. KALAIGNAR,** who is also the Chairman of the International Institute of Tamil Studies, for his able guidance toTamil Studies and his kindness towards Tamil Scholars.

Hon'ble Finance Minister Professor K. Anbazhagan, who dedicates himself to the Tamils and the Tamil language, deserves our sincere thanks.

I also thank **Dr. K. Rajamanickam,** I.A.S. (Retd.), Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for his constant encouragement to Tamil Studies.

For his benign support to Tamil Studies in the International Institute of Tamil Studies, my sincere thanks go to Thiru. **G. Muthusamy,** I.A.S., Secretary to Government, Tamil Development, Endowments and Information department.

I appreciate Dr. A.A.Manavalan, the editor of this publication for his sincere and untiring enthusiasm in preparing this compilation.

Director

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EDITORIAL NOTE

Thanks largely to the enthusiastic efforts of the Government of Tamilnadu in preserving the literary and cultural heritage of the Tamils, the erection and consecration of the monumental statue of Tiruvalluvar was accomplished at the tip of Cape Comerin solemnized by the union of the three great seas and oceans. The International Institute of Tamil Studies decided to commemorate that occasion by bringing out some publications regarding Tiruvalluvar's immortal Kural. The publication committee of the Institute assigned to me the project of preparing an anthology of essays in English on Tirukkural. I am grateful to the members of the committee for giving me an opportunity to undertake this useful work.

It was decided after deep deliberation to cover at least a hundred years of scholarly discussion on the literary and cultural merits of the Kural. Taking the first complete translation of the Kural in English by G.U. Pope (1886) as the first attempt, the selection was extended upto the year 1986 in which a very useful and exhaustive compilation of Tributes on Tirukkural was published by K.D. Thirunavukkarasu. This collection of essays comprising of a hundred years of scholarly appreciation of the Kural will be a humble service to the "Bard of Universal Man".

Almost all the authors of these essays are erudite scholars in the realm of the Kural; they eulogize the greatness and universality of the maxims of the Kural for different and even contradicitory reasons. A close and comparative reading of these essays will throw the required light for proper understanding and appreciation of the Kural.

Being a compilation of essays from different sources such as books and journals, the editor's humble gratitude is due to the authors of the essays and articles, and to the following publishers of the books and journals.

Asian Educational services, New Delhi; Amudha Nilayam Private Ltd, Madras - 18; Navalar Somasundara Bharathiar Educational Charity Trust, Madurai; International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai - 113; Diocesan Press, Madras; Madurai Kamaraj University; University of Madras; Tamil Literature, Weisbaden, Maniyagam, Madras-85.

Siddhanta Deepika or the Light of Truth; Tamilian Antiquary, Tamil Culture, The Year Book of Legal Studies, Law college Madras.

Last but not least is my humble tribute to the eminent architect Ganapathy Sthapathi for his exhaustive note given in the Appendix on the concept, design and execution of the monumental statue of Tiruvalluvar.

A.A. Manavalan

1

The Sacred Kurral of Tiruvalluva Nayanar

REV. G. U. POPE

Introduction

I. General Introduction

The weaver of Mayilapur, known now only as Tiruvalluvar, was undoubtedly one of the great geniuses of the world; but his fame belongs to South India alone, and to only one great race there. He is the venerated sage and lawgiver of the Tamil people, of whom there are about ten millions inhabiting the Central and Southern Karnatic.

M. Ariel, in a letter to Burnouf published in the Journal Asiatique (Nov. - Dec. 1848) speaks of Tiruvalluvar's great work as 'the master piece of Tamil literature - one of the highest and purest expressions of human thought.' Again, he says: 'That which above all is wonderful in the Kurral is the fact that its author addresses himself, without regard to castes, peoples or beliefs, to the whole community of mankind; the fact that he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason; that he proclaims in their very essence, in their eternal abstractness, virtue and truth; that he presents, as it were one group the highest laws of domestic and social life; that he is equally perfect in thought, in language and in poetry, in the austere metaphysical contemplation of the great mysteries of the Divine Nature, as in the easy and graceful analysis of the tenderest emotions of the heart.'

It is strange that the poet and his one great work are both without a name.[1] The author himself is commonly known as Tiru-valluva-nayanar (lit. 'the sacred devotee, priest, or soothsayer of the Parraya caste'). Tradition says he was a weaver, and of those who are regarded as the refuse of all the castes - the pariah tribe. Their priests, soothsayers, teachers, or 'prophets' are styled Valluvar. But he does not write as a priest, and it would be impossible to gain from his writings any idea of the kind of temple in which he lit the sacred lamp and presented the offerings of his people. It is strange that the title by which alone the greatest poet of South India is known should be one indicating an origin most degrading and contemptible in the eyes of the vast multitudes of whom he has been for ten centuries the Oracle. The last has indeed become first. A wild and utterly incredible tradition assigns him a Brahman father and a no-caste mother; and represents the poetess Avvai (='old woman': her name, too, is unknown) as his sister, while several other poets, of whom some fragments remain, were his brothers. All that we certainly know is that he was a pariah, and a weaver; lived at S. Thome, or Mayilapur, now a suburb of Madras; and had an intimate friend, probably, called Elela-cinkan (='Lion of the surf'), who was the captain of a small vessel.

The poet's home was a place around which there still lingers a strange oriental beauty, and which has probably not changed much since the time when the passerby might have heard the click of the shuttle mingling with the low chaunt of his melodious verse. I may be pardoned for dwelling on my recollections of this interesting spot, since in 1840 my missionary life began there, and while visiting the villages around, that enthusiasm for the great Tamil poet was first kindled which has been an important factor in my life. Mayilapur or Mayilai, is 'the town of peacocks,' and the name seems to indicate a place of groves and gardens around old temples. There is a sacred tank still, with a belt of cocoanut palms, and a square of old leaf-covered native houses in any one of which the poet might have

lived. The sea-shore is close by, and Elela-cinkan's successors (I fear much degenerated) dwell there yet. The poet could hear the boom of the surf-waves, and pondered often, doubtless, on the shore of what he calls the nama-nir, 'the gruesome wave.'(149).

A higher interest is imparted to the spot and its neighbourhood, at least to Christians, by the tradition (so long and lightly discredited, but now generally acknowledged to be authentic) that there S. Thomas preached and here met his death by a spear (vel) such as the poet often speaks of, and was here buried.[2] Mayilapur to us is better known as S.Thome: In this neighbourhood a Christian community has existed from the earliest times. Here are fine old Armenian and Portugese churches and a Christian inscription of the 5th century. Here Pantaenus of Alexandria taught; and we are quite warranted in imagining Tiruvalluvar, the thoughtful poet, the eclectic, to whom the teaching of the Jains was as familiar as that of every Hindu sect, who was not hindered by any caste prejudices from familiar intercourse with foreigners, whose one thought was to gather knowledge from every source, whose friend the sea-captain would bring him tidings of every stranger's arrival (coming from Ceylon, perhaps, in his own dhoney): we may fairly, I say, picture him pacing along the sea-shore with the Christian teachers and imbibing Christian ideas, tinged with the peculiarities of the Alexandrian school, and day by day working them into his own wonderful Kurral.

The East and the West have influenced one another in a very real and not yet thoroughly understood way from the earliest times. It is undoubtedly a noteworthy fact that from this Mayilapur, on which the eyes of Christendom have ever rested as the one sacred spot in India of Apostolic labour, comes the one Oriental book, much of whose teaching is an echo of the 'Sermon on the Mount'.

The name குறள் Kurral is given par excellence to this the poet's great and only work; which consists of 133 chapters, each containing 10 couplets; and thus numbers 2,660 lines.

Kurral means 'anything short' (✓kurr, sans. ✓Krit, Lat. curt-us Gr. Kap, A.S.sceor-t), and is properly the name of the couplet, as being the shortest species of stanza in the Tamil language (p. xxvi).

Tiruvalluvar's poem is thus by no means a long one though in value it far outweighs the whole of the remaining Tamil literature, and is one of... the great works which have entered into the very soul of a whole... and which can never die. According to a custom not unknown in Europe, a series of verses (most of them very modern) bearing the names of all the great Tamil poets is prefixed to the kurral under the name of 'The Garland of Tiruvalluvar, and exhausts the subject of his excellence with every variety of hyperbole.

Several of these are neat. One, by பரணர் (Paranar), says that as மால் (Vishnu), when he appeared as Vamana (குறள் kurral means 'dwarf' also), or the dwarf, measured with two steps heaven and earth, so with the two lines of his diminutive Venpa-footed kurral - verse has Tiruvalluvar measured the universe.

(மாலுங் குறளாய் வளர்ந்திரண்டு மாணடியான்
ஞால முழுது' நயந்த' ளந்தான்; வாலறிவன்
வள்ளுவருந் தங்குறள்வெண் பாவடியால் வையத்தார்
உள்ளுவ வெல்லாம் அளந்தார் ஓர்ந்து.)

Complete in itself, the sole work of its author, it has come down the stream of ages absolutely uninjured, - hardly a single various reading of any importance being found, - and every rival sect in the Tamil country claims the Kurral as its own, and has furnished it with commentary and critical aparatus accordingly.

Tradition declares that Tiruvalluvar composed his Kurral at the request of his neighbours, in order that the Tamil people might have a Vedam of their own and it was doubtless intended to become the abiding authority on all ethical subjects for the Tamil country. The author must have already possessed a great reputation, or this request would not have been made; yet there are no traces of any other writings of his.

The Kurral, when finished, is said to have been taken by its author to Madura, where there was a college of learned Tamil scholars, supposed to have been founded in the days of Vamca

Cekhara, an ancient king of the Pandya kingdom. In this college Civa himself had condescended to appear as the forty-nineth professor, especially devoting himself to the exposition of the Tamil language. The god also bestowed on the college a sacred bench of solid diamond, on which no one could sit who was not a faultless scholar. (See Wilson's Hist. Sketch of the Kingdom of Pandya.) Lists are given of the forty-eight members of this academy, but there are no genuine remains of their writings. The result of the appearance of Tiruvalluvar is variously stated. The general idea is that the high-caste assembly would not permit him to take his seat on the bench with the learned pandits, on account of his want of caste; but that, meekly acquiescing in his own exclusion, he simply requested permission to lay his book on the end of the seat. On this being granted, the book was placed where the poet should have been seated, and the whole bench at once disappeared, leaving the learned professors afloat in the Lotus-tank. This story is obviously inconsistent with the idea which is usually prevalent, that the president was Kapilar, himself a Pariah, and a brother of Tiruvalluvar.

The truth seems to be that the Madura school of Tamil literature, now too full of Sanskrit influences, was supreme till the advent of the S. Thome poet, whose fame at once eclipsed that of the southern sages.

There are no data which may enable us to fix with precision the period at which our poet flourished. I think between A.D.800 and 1000 is its probable date. The style is not archaic - far less so than that of the Civaga Cintamani Remembering that its author was not fettered by caste prejudices, that his greatest friend was a sea-captain, that he lived at S.Thome, that he was evidently an 'eclectic,' that Christian influences were at the time at work in the neighbourhood, and that many passages are strikingly Christian in their spirit, I cannot feel any hesitation in saying that the Christian Scriptures were among the sources from which the poet derived his inspiration.

Dr. Graul, a devoted student of Tamil literature, published an edition in Leipzig and in London, in 1856, with German and Latin translations. It is very valuable, though incomplete - owing to his lamented death - and has serious misprints.

The Rev. W.H. Drew, a missionary of the London society in Madras, published an edition of 63 chapters, with English Translation, and additional notes by the fine old scholar, Ramanuja Kavirayar,[3] with the Tamil commentary of Parimelaragar. This is, as far as it goes, the best edition.

The purely native editions, issued under the editorship of the late learned Pandit Caravanaperumalaiyar of Madras, are very correct and valuable.

Twelve native commentators have illustrated by verbal commentaries the whole text; but the student will do well to disregard the meanings read in to the verses by persons, native or European, who are anxious to prove that Tamil sage taught their own favourite dogmas. Valluvar is generally very simple and his commentators very profound.

In regard to the philosophico - theological system taught in the Kurral various opinions have naturally been held. Every Hindu sect claims the great poet, and strives to interpret his verses so as to favour its own dogmas. Something on these subjects will be found in the notes to each chapter. The Jains especially consider him their own, and he has certainly used several of their technical terms and seems to have been cognizant of the latest developments of that system.

There is one couplet, however, that is destructive of the idea that Tiruvalluvar was a Jain. In Chapter III, fourth couplet, a story regarding Indra is referred to as proving that ascetics have power over the gods. The sage was Gautama, who cursed Indra for deceiving the sage's wife, Ahalya. Now, according to Jain ideas, a sage could have no wife, nor could he feel the emotion of anger, not had he the power to inflict punishment. A Jain

would not believe the story, and could scarcely use it as the author of the Kurral has done. But, in as far as it is Oriental, Tiruvalluvar's teaching is just such as the study of the Hinduism, in the light of Cankara's reforms, combined with that of the Jain system in its later developments, and of the Bhagavadgita, might have produced.

There is no trace in the Kurral of many things, systems, doctrines and practices, current in South India at different periods, because, I suppose, they had been eliminated from the sage's own eclectic system of faith and practice, and because his work is didactic, and not controversial.

What philosophy he teaches seems to be of the eclectic school as represented by the Bhagavadgita.[4]

Of Bhakti - that compound of Piotis and agape, the introduction of which into India I still think (with Weber) is mainly due to the influence of Christianity - the first chapter of the Kurral is a beautiful exposition.

The Kurral owes much of its popularity to its exquisite poetic form. A Kurral is a couplet (Third Gram, 187) containing a complete and striking idea expressed in a refined and intricate metre. No translation can convey an idea of its charming effect. It is truly an 'apple of gold in a network of silver'. Something of the same kind is found in Greek epigrams, in Martial, and the Latin elegiac verse. There is a beauty in the periodic character of the Tamil construction in many of these verses that reminds the reader of the happiest efforts of Propertius. Probably the Tamil sage adopted it as being the best representative in Tamil of the Sanskrit sloka.

The brevity rendered necessary by the form gives an oracular effect to the utterances of the great Tamil 'Master of the sentences.' They are the choicest of moral epigrams.

The selection of the most difficult metre in the language - one permitting no deviations from strict rule and requiring such wonderful condensation - for a long work, showed that the

author intended to expend upon it his utmost of power, and to make it a 'possession for ever', a 'delight of many generations.'

The laws of the Venpa metre, in which Kurral is composed, are very curious, and, in fact, unique in prosody. They will be explained farther on; but the student of Tamil is referred to my Third Tamil Grammar for a more complete exposition. In the Clavis humaniorum litterarum sublimioris Tamulici idiomatis, by the great Beschi, the whole subject of Tamil poetry is discussed. The late lamented Dr. A.C. Burnell, M.C.S. (among his very many benefactions to Oriental learning), issued a reprint of this valuable work, which is most faithful to its native sources, the best of which are printed in my Third Grammar.

The following is an analysis of the whole Kurral, as given in the Commentary of Parimelaragar.

It is divided into three Books treating of Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure. The Nannul, a standard Tamil Grammar of much later date has the rule:-

'The benefit derived from a treatise must be the attaining to Virtue, Wealth, Enjoyment, Heaven (Delivernace)'. In the 26th sloka of the Hitopadesa the same enumeration is given:

धर्म्मार्थकाममोश्राणां - Dharmmartha - kama - mokshanam

Our author treated of only three of these. Did he leave his work incomplete? or did he refrain from any exposition of Vidu or Moksha because he resolved to take only the practical view of the things? I suppose he was not satisfied with the glimpses he had obtained of man's future and waited for light; or perhaps, he thought his people not prepared for higher teaching. Ch.xxxv. - xxxxvii, give us his nearest approach to the subject.

BOOK I-VIRTUE. Ch. I.- XXXVIII.

The tamil word is ARRAM

I. INTRODUCTION. Ch. I-IV.

1. The praise of God.[5]

2. The excellence of rain.

3. The greatness of those who have renounced : Ascetics.

4. The commendation of the strength of virtue:
'ad virtutem seetandum hortatio.'

(Beschi; makes Ch. 1-III. the Preface, 'Prologus', and Ch.IV. the Introduction.

II. VIRTUE IN DOMESTIC LIFE. Ch. V-XXIV.

5. Domestic life: married life.
6. The goodness of the help to domestic life : the wife.
7. The gain of sons: children.
8. The possession of affection: love of family.
9. The cherishing of guests : hospitality .
10. The utterance of pleasant things: kindly speech.
11. The recognition of benefits conferred: gratitude.
12. Impartial justice.
13. The possession of restraint : self-control.
14. The possession of decorous conduct.
15. Not coveting another's wife.
16. The possession of forbearance.
17. Absence of envy.
18. Absence of covetousness.
19. Not speaking evil of the absent.
20. Not uttering profitless words.
21. Dread of evil deeds.
22. The recognition of duty.
23. Giving.
24. Renown.

III. VIRTUE IN A LIFE OF RENUNCIATION: ASCETIC VIRTUE Ch. XXV - XXXVII.

25. Possession of grace: benevolence (Comp. 8.)
26. The refusal of flesh : abstinence from animal food.
27. Penitence : mortification.

28. Inconsistent conduct : indecorum.
    (Opposite of 14.)
29. Absence of fraud.
30. Truthfulness.
31. Absence of wrath.
32. Inflicting no pain
33. Not killing
34. Instability (of earthly things).
35. Renunciation.
36. Perception of the true.
37. Extirpation of desire.

IV. DESTINY

38. Ancient deeds : fate.

BOOK II - WEALTH. Ch. XXXIX.-CVIII. (PROPERTY).

I. ROYALTY. Ch. XXXIX - LXIII.

39. Kingly greatness.
40. Learning.
41. The absence of learning.
42. Hearing
43. The possession of knowledge : wisdom.
44. Correction of faults.
45. Seeking the help of the great.
46. Not associating with the mean.
47. The method of acting after due consideration.
48. The recognition of power (in an opponent).
49. The recognition of opportunity.
50. The recognition of place.
51. Examination before reposing confidence.
52. The employment of duly-selected agents.

53. Cherishing kindred.
54. The absence of self-forgetfulness.
55. The right sceptre.
56. Tyranny, (The obliquity of the sceptre.)
57. The not acting so as to inspire of the sceptre.)
58. Benignity.
59. The use of detectives.
60. Magnanimity: elevation of mind: energy.
61. The absence of sloth.
62. Manly activity.
63. Not despairing in afflictive times.

II. MINISTERS OF STATE. Ch. LXIV.- LXXIII.

64. The ministry.
65. Power in words.
66. Purity in deed.
67. Firmness in deed.
68. The method of action.
69. The embassy.
70. The way to behave in the presence of kings.
71. Reading the mind : recognition of the sign.
72. Recognition of the council.
    Tact in the Council - chamber.
73. Not quailing before the Council.

III. ESSENTIALS OF A STATE Cr LXXIV - XCV

74. The land.
75. The fort.
76. The method of collecting revenue.
77. The excellence of the army.
78. Military spirit.

79. Friendship : allies.
80. Scrutiny of friendship.
81. Familiarity.
82. Evil friendship.
83. Faithless friendship.
84. Folly.
85. Unwisdom.
86. Hostility.
87. The excellence of hate, how to make enmity profitable.
88. Skill in the conduct of quarrels.
89. Secret enmity : treachery.
90. Giving no offence to the great.
91. Uxoriousness : 'not going in the wife's way'
92. Wanton women.
93. Abstinence from toddy'
94. Gaming.
95. Medical art.

IV. APPENDIX. Ch. XCVI-CVIII.

96. Nobility.
97. Honour.
98. Greatness.
99. Perfect excellence.
100. Courtesy.
101. Wealth without benefit.
102. The possession of shame.
103. The way to sustain the family.
104. Agriculture.
105. Poverty.
106. Mendicancy.
107. The dread of mendicancy.
108. Vileness.

BOOK III - LOVE. (SEXUAL LOVE.) Ch. CIX.-Cxxxiii.

1. CONCEALED LOVE. Ch.CIX. - CXV. The Gand harva Marriage.

109. Mental disturbance caused by the princess' beauty.
110. Recognition of the signs (of mutual love.)
111. Rejoicing in the embrace.
112. The praise of her beauty.
113. Declaration of love's special grace.
114. Abandonment of reserve.
115. The rumour.

II. WEDDED LIFE. Ch. CXVI-CXXXIII. 'The ACURA Marriage'

116. Not enduring separation.
117. Complainings of absence.
118. Eyes consumed with grief.
119. Grief's pallor.
120. Solitary anguish.
121. Sad memories.
122. Visions of the night.
123. Lament at eventide.
124. Wasting away.
125. Soliloquies
126. Reserve overcome.
127. Longing for return.
128. Full declaration.
129. Longing for re-union.
130. Dissatisfaction with herself.
131. Pouting.
132. Petty jealousies.
133. The pleasures of temporary variance.

In the Notes I have striven to remove difficulties from the path of the beginner. The poem will not at first reveal all its beauties to the student. The whole scope and connection of chapters V.-XXIV should be studied to show the beauty of the life of Tamil householder as the South-Indian *Vates sacer* contemplates it. The ideal householder leads on earth a consecrated life (50), not unmindful of any duty to the living, or to the departed (42). His wife, the glory of his house, is modest and frugal; adores her husband ; guards herself, and is the guardian of his house's fame (vi). His children are his choicest treasures; their babbling voices are his music ; he feasts with the gods when he eats the rice their tiny fingers have played with; and his one aim is to make them wortheir than himself (vii). Affection is the very life of his soul: of all his virtues the first and greatest. The sum and source of them all is love (VIII). His house is open to every guest, whom he welcomes with smiling face and pleasant word, and with whom he shares his meal (xi.). Courteous in speech (x.) grateful for every kindness (XI) just in all his dealings (XII.). master of himself in perfect self-control (XIII), strict in the performance of every assigned duty (XIV) pure (XV). patient and forbearing (XVI.). with a heart free from envy (XVII.), moderate in desires (XVIII), speaking no evil of others (XIX), diligent in the discharge of all the duties of his position (XXII.), and liberal in his benefactions (XXIII.), he is one whom all unite to praise (XXIV.),

It is not irreverent to put side by side with this the words which I feel sure he had heard, or at least the summary of them (Phil. iv. 6-8):

> Whatsoever things are pure,
> whatsoever things are honourable,
> whatsoever things are just
> whatsoever things are of good report,
> if there by any virtue, and if there by any praise,
> think on these things.

Tradition[6] (reflecting, doubtless, in many things the spirit of a much later age) says that the life of the poet in Mayilapur, with his wife Vacuki was in perfect accordance with these

chapters. She was the embodiment of all the Kurral requires in the 'help to household life.'

In his youth, her father, Marka-cakayan, struck with his virtues, offered the poet his daughter in marriage. Tiruvalluvar was inclined to marry, because domestic virtue is the highest, yet resolved first to try the maiden's temper and gifts; and accordingly replied : 'If she will take this sand and make it into rice for me, I will take her as my wife'. Vacuki meekly took the basket of sand, and, feeling sure that what the holy man ordained was possible and right, proceeded to boil it; and, as (v. 55) the virtuous woman is said to have power with the gods, so it came to pass with her ; a miracle was wrought on her behalf, and she brought him the rice for which he asked. So she became his wife, faithful and obedient.

In after years, when the poet's fame had spread through all the Tamil country, one day a noble stranger came to the weaver's cottage, and asked the question (so much discussed in those times), 'Which is greater - domestic life, or a life of asceticism?' The sage, while courteously entertaining the stranger, gave no reply in words to the question. The enquirer was left to see domestic life in its perfect grace, and judge for himself. What he saw was this. One day when Vacuki was drawing water from the well the sage suddenly called her, and the obedient wife instantly came, leaving the bucket hanging mid-way in the well.

Another day, when the good housewife brought her husband to his morning meal of cold rice, he complained that it brunt his mouth! when she, unquestioning, and unhesitating in her attention to his comfort, instantly began to fan it. Another day, at noon, when the glaring light was everywhere, the sage, who was at work at his loom, let fall his shuttle, and called for a light to seek it! The wife, with unquestioning obedience, lit a lamp and brought it him!

The enquirer had learnt his lesson : Where such a wife is found, domestic life is the best. Where such a wife is not, the life of the ascetic is to be preferred.

So the poet and his Vacuki, this Griselda of the Tamil olden days, lived, till the time that she must leave him, and gain 'release'. The dying wife looked wistfully at her husband. 'What is it?' said he. When you married me, and on that day I stood and spread the rice for you (literally, for you, my god) you gave me a commandment to place always, with your meals, a cup of water and a needle. I know not why it was.' 'It was, he replied, 'that if a grain of rice were spilt, I might pick it up and purify it. Satisfied, the meek Vacuki closed her eyes for ever.

She had never during her whole married life questioned her lord's command! And also, it is clear, no grain of rice had ever been spilt!

As he lay that night, after her death and cremation, and pondered, he was heard to exclaim (there are many various readings of the verse):-

அடிசிற் கினியாளே! அன்புடையாளே!
படிசொற் றவறாத பாவாய்!
அடிவருடிப்
பின்றூங்கி முன்னெழுந்த பேதையே! போதியோ!
என்றூங்கும் என்கண் இரா?

'Sweet as my daily food! O full of love ! O Wife,
Obedient ever to my word! Chafing my feet,
The last to sleep, the first to rise, O gentle one!
By night, henceforth, what slumber to mine eyes?'

Whatever may be thought of these characteristic traditions, it is the singular glory of the poet to have drawn this picture of the perfect householder; and it speaks loudly in favour of the Tamil race that these couplets are enshrined in the hearts of the whole people. Dynastic changes, Muhammadan raids, and irruptions of alien races, through a dozen centuries, have changed many things in the south :

'Old times are changed, old manners gone,
And strangers fill the *Pandyan*'s throne,'

but the Tamil race preserves many of its old virtues, and has the promise of a noble future. Their English friends in teaching them all that the West has to impart, will find little to

unteach in the moral lessons of the Kurral rightly understood. Sir A. Grant says: Humility, charity and forgiveness of injuries, being Christian qualities, are not described by Aristotle." Now these three are everywhere forcibly inculcated by the Tamil moralist. These are the themes of his finest verses. So far, then, we may call this Tamil poet Christian; and to understand him, to free him from mistaken glosses, to teach his works, to correct their teaching where it is misleading, and to supplement it where it is defective, would seem to be the duty of all who are friends of the race that glories in the possession of this poetical masterpiece. Sir A. Grant (Aris. Ethics, I.81), treating of Greek morality before the birth of Moral Philosophy, 'says truly: It is obvious that such a code as this could only arise among an essentially moral and noble race.' This is precisely what I claim for the Tamil-speaking peoples, and on the same ground. We shall not do all the good we might do among them till we more unreservedly recognize this.

No doubt many couplets in this remarkable work say more to us than they did to those for whom they were written. Many of these epigrammatic masterpieces have a profound significance, of which their author himself was hardly conscious. Their resemblance to the gnomic poetry of Greece is remarkable as to their subjects, their sentiments, and the state of society when they were uttered.

Something must be said regarding the Third Book on 'Love'

Of this Mr. Drew said, that 'it could not be translated into any European language without exposing the translator to infamy' But this is only true in regard to certain of the commentaries upon it, which are simply detestable. I am persuaded that it is perfectly pure in its tendency, and in the intention of its wise and high-souled composer. Its title is Kamattu-pal, 'the division which treats of kama' and this means Lust or Love.

Kaman is the Hindu Cupid. Hindu ideas differ from our own. This prejudice kept me from reading the third part of the Kurral for some years; but the idea occurred to me very forcibly that he who wrote:

> 'Spotless be thou in mind! This only merits virtue's name;
> All else, mere pomp and idle sound, no real worth can claim,'(34)

could not have covered himself with the spotted infamy of singing a song of lust. Thus I ventured at length to read and study it, rejecting commentators, when I was able fairly to appreciate its spirit; and, as the result, I translate it, believing that I shall be regarded as having done good service in doing so. Dr. Graul has published it in German and in Latin, M. Ariel in French.

> 'To the pure all things are pure.'

I may add that many give to the whole a mystical interpretation, an idea with which commentators on the book of Canticles have made us familiar. Its interpretation as an allegory exhibiting the play (S. lila) of the Divine Spirit with the embodied soul, would be in harmony with much that is found in Muhammadan literature as well as in Sanskrit, especially in Buddhist writers. Yet I can hardly think that Tiruvalluvar's tone of mind would lead to this method of teaching spiritual truths.

In the Notes I have introduced many stanzas from the நாலடி (Naladi), the work which stands next in estimation to the Kurral among the Tamil people. The tradition regarding the Naladi-nannurru, or '400 Quatrains,' is that 8,000 sages brought their verses to the king of Madura, who to test their worth, caused the palmyra leaves on which they were written to be thrown into the River Vaikai. Those that floated against the current were to be preserved. Three collections of leaves, stood the test; one was found to contain these 400, and the two others consisted of similar collections of verses, which are extant under the names of Pala-moli (பழமொழி = 'Old words') and Arra-

nerricaram (அறநெறிச்சாரம் = 'Essence of the way of Virtue'), The two latter works are inferior.

I suppose that the meaning of the tradition is that these are verses of various ancient Tamil poets, which the stream of time has not been able to sweep away into oblivion. Since they were not allowed to perish, they may be presumed to have been the most popular, perhaps the most worthy, compositions of those olden times. The authors seem to have been Jains. Perhaps we may refer them to the time of Kuna Pandya, some time in the eleventh century A.D.

They are of very unequal value, often obscure, sometimes trivial. The prevailing tone is cynical, and we miss in them the healthy humanity of Tiruvalluvar. They have been forced by a later native editor into an arrangement harmonizing with that of the Kurral; the result of which is, that the title of a chapter often affords no clue to its contents. They are mostly of much later date, I think, than the Kurral, and often seem to indicate an acquaintance with it. I must mention that, though by different unknown hands, I feel sure I can see the work of one principal writer in about half of them. He was a Tamilian Antisthenes.

Though often very beautiful, these verses especially lack the condensation and vigour of our poet; and I have often felt tempted to exclaim, when noting how much less they are able to say in a quatrain than Tiruvalluvar in a couplet:

....

The student of the Kurral should, however, thoroughly master the Naladi.

In regard to the translation, I may venture to say that it is faithful, and that I have not read into the rendering a single idea or thought which there were not good grounds for supposing that the poet intended to convey. I thought it best to try to give a metrical translation. The Tamil scholar will see that I have tried to reproduce even the rhythm in many cases, but I could

not retain the inimitable grace, condensation and point of the original.

Nothing, not even a corrupt Greek chorus, so defies the efforts of the student as does very much of the high Tamil poetry. The poetical dialect of Tamil allows every kind and any amount of ellipsis, so that a line is often little else than a string of crude forms artfully fitted together. The best compositions are quatrains or couplets, each containing a complete idea: a moral epigram. Their construction resembles that of a design in mosaic. The materials fitted together are sometimes mere bits of coloured glass, but sometimes also very precious stones and pure gold. And the design? Why you walk round it, and try to catch it in all lights and feel at first and often for a long time, as if it meant nothing at all, till you catch some hint, and at once it lies revealed, something to be thought of again and again, some bit of symbolism it may be, not unfrequently grotesque, often quaint, but sometimes also of rare beauty.

Especially of Tiruvalluvar it may be said, as Archbishop Trench says of S. Augustine (*S. Augustine as an Interpreter of Scripture*, p.154): 'He abounds in short and memorable, and, if I might so call them, epigrammatic sayings, concentrating with a forceful brevity the whole truth which he desires to impart into some single phrase, forging it in a polished shaft, at once pointed to pierce, and barbed that it shall not lightly drop from, the mind and memory.'

NOTES

1. 'Ce livre sans nom, par un autre sans nom.' - Ariel. Dr. Barth, Religions of India, translated by Rev. J. Wood, p.157 (Trubner's Oriental Series, 1882), speaks of this work as 'that admirable collection of stanzas in the Tamil (sic) language, which is instinct with the purest and most elevated religious emotion.'
2. The reader may find a full discussion of this subject in Dr. German's learned and instructive work. *Dio Kirche der Thomas Christen.*
3. With reference of my old Pandit, I venture to quote words used elsewhere:- 'In many ways we fail to understand the people of India.

Hindus are often spoken of as apathetic. I should term them fervid. My first teacher of Tamil was a most learned scholar, long dead (peace to his ashes!), who possessed more than any man I have known the *ingenium perfervidum*. He was a profound and zealous Vaishnavite. I remarked one day a long white line or scar on his neck, where his rosary of huge Eleocarpus beads hung and ventured to ask him (I had to wait on such occasions for the mollia tempora fandi!) its history. "Well." said he, "when I was a boy, I could learn nothing. Nothing was clear to me, and I could remember nothing. But I felt my whole soul full of an intense love of learning. So, in despair, I went to a temple of Saraswati (the goddess of learning), and, with a passionate prayer, I cut my throat and fell bleeding at her feet. In a vision she appeared to me, and promised I should become the greatest of Tamil scholars. I recovered, and from that day, by her grace. I found all things easy, and I am what she said I should be." I believe he was so: and from that noble enthusiastic teacher I learnt to love Tamil and to reverence its ancient professors.'

4. Barth, Religions of India, p.192 (Trubner, 1882).

5. Though his first chapter is 'The Praise of God', theology is no part of his general subject and he scarcely alludes to a Divine Being in the remaining chapters.

6. The Tiruvalluvar Carittiram (திருவள்ளுவர் சரித்திரம்) and the Mahanite culamani (மகாநீதி சூளாமணி) will satisfy the most enthusiastic lover of traditions.

The SACRED KURRAL OF TIRUVALLUVA NAYANAR 1886, Rpt. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1999. PP. I - XV.

2

THE ETHICS OF KURAL

J.M. Nallaswamy Pillai

Kural, in Tamil, signifies a couplet of a peculiar metre. As the work is composed of such couplets, it passes by the name of Tirukkural, by synecdoche, Tiru (திரு) denoting holy. The author goes by the name Tiruvalluva Nayanar. These are the popular names by which the work and the author pass current in Tamil literature and among Tamil scholars. There are other honorific designations for the author, such as Saint, First Poet, Divine Poet, Brahma and Great scholar; and for the work, such as the work of three books, Modern Veda, Divine Work, Faultless word, Tamil Veda and Universal Veda.

Those of you, who wish to have our idea of the personal appearance of the sage, may proceed to his shrine at Mylapore, a minute's walk from the Barber's Bridge, and witness the statue of the canonized saint. The folded knot of his lock, the bushy moustache and beard sweeping over his breast, the gravity of the forehead, the broad eyes revealing his noble heart, and the grace of his majestic frame are such as remind one of Plato and Socrates. Add to these, the beads in his right and the moral code in the left hand, the saint in a sitting posture on a raised seat, seeming to impart instruction to his disciples, you will verily believe that he is a Tamil Rishi next to Agasthya. He is in fact said to be the great grandson of Agasthya. At least the genealogy framed by the pandits states so.

Modern researches of Tamil Scholars of critical acumen, and also internal evidence of two of the Five Great Tamil Epics, go to establish, that Tiruvalluva Nayanar lived in the first century of the Christian era, if not earlier. At any rate, the Dark Ages of Europe had not entirely. passed away, the Middle Ages had not yet dawned, the Mohametan caliphate there was not, and Christendom was just in its seed-pot, when our moralist was planning his work, and bending over his loom for his daily bread, in the great historical city of Mylapore. Most of the great Champions and Leaders of Hinduism, in its various aspects of Saivism, Vaishnavism, and Adwaitism, made their avatars a considerably long time after our great Eclectic. Nevertheless it was an age when the Tamil country was, within historical periods, for the first time, in its zenith of power and fame. The Tamil country was a great commercial Emporium between the East and the West. The Aryan Brahmans had long ago colonized the Dravidian country, and secured, to some extent, ministerial and spiritual offices under the Three Great Tamil sovereigns. The third and last Tamil College of the Pandiyas in Madura - the then great University of Southern India - was in a flourishing state. At the metropolitan seats, we understand from contemporary literature, there were Buddhist and Jain shrines side by side with Vaishnava and Saiva temples, There were temples dedicated to Indra and Brahma now forgotten deities. It seems to have been an age of Religious toleration. It was an age, when learned scholars were patronized by gentlemen, heroes and kings. It was an age of wide poetical creation. It was also an age, when other fine arts received princely patronage. It was the Elizabethan and the Augustan age, as it were, of the Tamils. Excepting the modern wonders of the press, steam and electricity the age seemed to be an archetype of the enlightened current century.

In such an age, and such a country, and amidst such classical surroundings, was born, at Mylapore, the Socrates of Southern India - the last of the seven issues of the intermarriage of a

Brahman and an outcaste, as tradition would have it. It is not our purpose here to eke out truth, by analysing the myths and legends in the crucible of modern scholarly criticism. That there was such a personage who produced the great work is sufficient for our present purposes. Nor need we expatiate upon the spotless and unsullied life said to have been led by this Solo Gnanion of the Tamils.

His work is one of the two oldest works now extant in Tamil Literature in their entirety, the other being the great grammar of Tolkappiyanar. That this work has been preserved these 1800 years and more, without the least addition or omission, is a lasting evidence of the greatness and immortality of the work. Many subsequent works of even a later production have undergone such multifarious textual variations that it is impossible in many passages to find the real author. The Tamils regard the Tirukkural of Tiruvalluva Nayanar in such high veneration, that they believe the author to be an incarnation of the creator of the universe- the great Brahma, and have canonized this paragon as a literary saint. Kural is to the Tamils what the Holy Bible is to Christendom, the Koran to the followers of the Prophet, and the divine Vedas to the Brahmans. And its unique feature is that it is not admixtured with any mythology or any special theology. Let us now analyse the contents of this great moral code - 'the masterpiece of Tamil Literature'.

Tamil Literature is based from very remote times on a peculiar philosophical classification. Subject matter of the domain of literature relates to either internal or external phenomena, matter interior (அகப்பொருள்) or exterior (புறப்பொருள்). The former deals of the passions and affections of the mind which act on man internally ; and the latter of things external to man. The former treats especially of clandestine and wedded love; and the latter of the ways of living and thriving, in the world, i.e., of virtue and wealth. Virtue, wealth and love are all held as subservient to, and as means of, obtaining Eternal

Bliss, which is not discussed in books, as it is incomprehensible and indescribable. It is now clear that the Brahman classification of the objects of humanity into Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha is well involved in a highly philosophic form in the Tamil classification. Tiruvalluva Nayanar; in the largeness of his heart, has imposed upon himself a humanizing task of leaving to the world a work which forms as it were a ladder to Eternal Bliss. Any genius, even of the first class, can add no more to his work complete in itself. He discusses at large Virtue, Wealth and Love, leaving his readers to infer that one who passes safely through these three ordeals is a welcome guest in Heaven.

In the Third Book of 25 chapters, on clandestine and wedded love, will be found the various shades of niceties in the growth and fruition of Love, better that you can trace them in the plot of a well-developed English or French novel. There are also a number of other works in Tamil which elaborate love in all its traits. They seem to uphold an imaginary and airy ideal of Love. Some of these traits are embodied even in purely religious hymns and sonnets. Manickavasagar a veriest ascetic-has written a work detailing these traits in praise of Siva at Chidambaram. And it seems a paradox that there should be a Book on Love at the end of our profound moral code. This ideal is explained by a great scholar and poet of the Madura College in the following manner :- One who is initiated into this ideal of love will ask his reverend master "What, sir! is the way of enjoying this love impossible for mortals?" The reverend sage answers the question - "You will have, my dear son before you enjoy this divine love, to perform austere penance", and initiates his willing disciple into the mysteries of penance.

The disciple after passing through the ordeal of penance penetrates into himself, and begins to abhor the burden of his flesh and its meanness, to depreciate the lusty love which opened his way to penance, and to see divine light. The divine light leads him unto heaven and perennial bliss even unto eternity.

This is the philosophy of the Love of Tamil Literature. And it is a matter of gilding the pill. To those who have not a lesson of this philosophy of Love, one half of Tamil Literature is but a lusty lore. You now see that there is Ethics, why even divine Ethics too, in this Third Book of Kural.

Passing over the first four chapters of the work, which form only a kind of introduction to it, we will take a pleasant walk through an avenue of 104 chapters, which are distributed between virtue and wealth, 34 for the former and 70 for the latter. Of the 34 chapters on virtue, 20 are devoted to Domestic virtue, and 14 to Ascetic virtue. This is the First Book. As for the Second Book on Wealth, it should be here observed parenthetically that Tamil scholars are of opinion that a delineation of the virtue and policy of the sovereign involves all that should be said on Wealth. Of the 70 chapters on wealth, 25 chapters are devoted to Royalty, 10 to Ministers of State, 22 to essentials of a state. The remaining 13 chapters form an appendix to this Book or rather to the first two books. The earthly Ethics of Kural must therefore be evolved from the first two books.

These first two Books draw the attention of every foreigner who begins and likes to have any acquaintance with Tamil Literature. The extreme exaggerations and hyperbolical language of the Epics repel him. But he pauses over these two Books, and admires the logical order of the subjects discussed, the pithy moral enigmas, and the sublime tone of morality inclucated therein. He who first despised the Tamils as half clad heathens and semi-barbarians now admires them for the valuable treasure locked up in their language. These two books are an eye sore to the Christian missionary who always comes to the east puffed up with the so-called sublimity of Christian morality. He can deprecate any other thing in Tamil Literature. But this ancient and splendid monument, he dares not slander. This is a stumbling block which can browbeat the most sublime ideas of Christian morality. The Christian missionary, under the impression that our author lived between 800 and 1000 A. D. has attempted to establish, that the Christian scriptures were among the sources from which the poet derived his inspiration, as in that time Mylapore was a centre of Christian asylum on

the Coromandal coast after the advent of St. Thome after whom the place is now called by Europeans. But this state ment of the missionary is an absurd literary anachronism. Our friend does not give his reasons; but that it is correct there can be no doubt. Prof. Seshagiri Sastriyar, M. A., states some of them in his new pamphlet "Essay on Tamil , Literature" which will be noticed more fully in our next.

Except in the appendix we can only glean morals incidentally here and there from the Second Book. The appendix has some chapters on affirmative morality such as Honor. Greatness, Perfection, Courtesy and self-reprobation ; and also some on negative morality such as Dread of Poverty, Mendicancy, Dread of mendicancy and Vileness. The general drift of the appendix is that one should by dint of perseverance and industry try to raise his social status, and preserve his self-respect and independence. The author advocates Agriculture as the best of professions, This appendix in short reveals the ideal citizen who instead of being a drone feeding on the product of others' labour should be an ornament of society by exhibiting traits of nobility, honour, greatness, and perfection, at the same time relieving the indigent, and sustaining the prestige of the family.

The first part of the Second Book on Royalty explains the ideal sovereign. He should be well read, and keep befitting company. He should not let opportunities slide. He should use his discretion in the choice of civil and military servants. His sceptre should be of gold firm yet popular and not of iron. He should ever be active without any despair in affliction.

The second part on ministers of state discusses their qualifications, and their conduct in the royal court and while on embassy. Here the author shows such minute observation and study of political manoeuvres that he is really Baconian in his discussion.

The third part on the Essentials of a state explains the necessaries of a kingdom, policy to be observed in international

relationships, and the tactics of warfare. This part-also forbids Uxoriousness and Harlotry, Intoxication and Gambling. The last chapter explains a very simple practical art of prolonging life and health.

The last chapter of the First Book discusses the Force of Destiny which is all powerful. The second part of the First Books on Ascetic Virtue teaches mercy to animals and forbids Animals food; insists on Penitence and protests against the Inconsistent conduct of Ascetics; discourages Fraud, Wrath, Giving pain to others and killing; and encourages Truthfulness. This part also commends Wisdom, knowledge of Truth, Renunciation and Extirpation of desire, and reveals the Instability of earthly things. This part might well have found a place at the end of the volume, but the author's plan justifies its present place.

The first part of the First Book depicts Domestic Virtue, and it is this part which upholds the model man and householder. The author finds that Domestic Virtue preponderates in the balance, and gives his palm to it.

"The ideal householder leads on earth a consecrated life, not unmindful of any duty to the living or to the departed. His wife-the glory of his house-is modest and frugal; adores her husband, guards herself, and is the guardian of his house's fame. His children are his choicest treasures; their babbling voices are his music; and his one aim is to make them wortheir than himself. Affection is the very life of his soul; of all his virtues the first and greatest. The sum and source of all is Love. His house is open to every guest, whom he welcomes with smiling face and pleasant word, and with whom he shares his meal. Courteous in speech, grateful for every kindness, just in all his dealings, master of himself in perfect self-control, strict in the performance of every assigned duty, pure, patient and forbearing, with a heart free from refraining from unprofitable words, dreading the touch of evil, diligent in the discharge of all the duties of his position, and liberal in his benefactions, he is one whom all unite to praise" Rev. Dr. Pope.

We have glanced over the contents of the volume. We are not in Utopia. The work propounds an ideal monarchy with ideal householders and citizens and true ascetics, all enjoying the sweets of the world unsullied, and attaining Divine Bliss. Those who can command leisure can make a comparative study of Valluvar's Kural and Plato's Republic. I am sure Valluvar's monarchy will out do Plato's Republic.

Having gained a comprehensive view of the author and his work, we may now recount the Ethics of Kural. We have here no scope for a psychological study of the work. An Ethical and Aesthetical study of it can very well be made, ethical in an much as we have a system of rules for regulating the actions of men, and aesthetical in so far the author conveys his ideas in a beautiful and attractive manner.

Domestic Virtue is based on affection. Devoid of affection one's body is but a bony frame clad in skin. Body is the seat of life only when love resides within. Hospitality is the essence of domestic virtue. The guest at your gate is as delicate as Anicha flower. It withers with a smell, and the guest is abashed with but one cold look. Sweet words accompany Hospitality.

> Who sees the pleasure kindly speech affords*
> why makes he use of harsh repellent words.?
> When pleasant words are easy, bitter words to use
> Is leaving sweet ripe fruit, the sour unripe to choose.

Gratitude / comes next. To be grateful, one need not return a good done to him. Feel the benevolence of it, enough. It is so strong that the mere thought of one good effaces the deadliest injury done you by the self same person. Gratitude is not measure for measure and weight for weight. It is here that you should make a mountain of a molehill, a palmyra of a millet seed. It does not become you to forget a good done : it is very good to forget an evil done you. In his Sermon on the mount Jesus said "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." But our author advises you to forget tres passes and he is only in the positive degree. In his chapter on Patience he is in the comparative degree.

With overweening pride when men with injuries assail
By thine own righteous dealing shalt thou prevail.

In another place where he would have you "shame your enemies by returning kindly benefits and pass unheeded the evil done by them" he is surely in the superlative degree. And yet he does not fall short of Jesus who preached in the above said resermon "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you" But in advising you to forget other's trespasses, Valluvar really really transcends Jesus who only wants to forgive other's trespasses.

Though our author is peculiarly strong on gratitude, yet he would not let you for its sake be impartial in your dealings.

To stand, like balanced rod that level hangs and rightly weighs,
With calm unbiassed equity of soul, is sage's praise.

The author then admonishes us to guard our tongue that unruly member of our body:-

whatever they fail to guard, over lips men guard should keep;
If not, through fault of tongue, they bitter tears shall weep.

The sore inflamed by fire may heal, not so
The sore inflamed by tongue.

Those who soil the sanctity of the conjugal bed are numbered with the dead by the author. He would count with ascetics those who endure with patience the evil words of transgressors, and would place even ascetics in the lower grade for the sake of these men.

A word of warning against Coveting:-

What saves prosperity from swift decline?
Absence of best to make another's cherished riches thine.

And then against Back-biting:-

In presence though unkindly words you speak, say not
In absence words whose ill result exceeds your thought
It is greater gain of virtuous good for man to die
Than live to slander absent friend and falsely praise when nigh

The chapter on ஒப்புரவறிதல், which can only be very meagerly rendered in English as knowing what befits a man's position, reminds us of Goldsmith's line.

Even his failings leaned to Virtue's side

A chapter on Giving next. "what is given to the needy deserves the name of gift ; all else has in view recompense" "To receive is bad though good it be said. To give is virtue though you gain no heaven". The goal of the householder is renown. Without this, life loses its charms. Even the ideal presented by the great peasant-poet of Scotland in Cottar's Saturday Night does not excel our ideal.

Ascetic virtue is based on Grace, as Domestic virtue on Affection. Grace is interpreted as the renunciation of flesh eating. When there is no one who would eat flesh, there will be no one who would sell flesh.

Than Ten thousand rich oblations, with libations rare,
Better the flesh of slaughtered beings not to share.

Then are rebuked those who hoodwink the world under the cloak of asceticism. These are wolves in sheep's clothing.

If you shun what all the world condemns as wrong
what's the worth of shaven head or tresses long?

Fraud is then condemned-

'Tis sin if in the mind man but the thought conceive,
By fraud I will my neighbour of his wealth bereave.

Then the author upholds Truth which he explains as speech free from all taint of evil. If you utter what you know to be false as true, your own heart brands you. It matters not if you many leave other acts of virtue undone, if you but uphold the cause of Truth.

Outward purity water will bestow
Inward purity from Truth alone will flow.

In this chapter on Truth, the author gives a plain practical advice, which rigid moralists may not allow.

> Falsehood may take the place of truthful word
> If blessing, free from fault, it can afford.

This in that part of the book which preaches on Ascetic virtue' It is from this contextual position that the advice receives its striking significance. Our author is a humanitarian. He seems to belong to the school of utilitarians who seek the greatest good of the greatest number. Truth is intended for the greatest good of the greatest number. If, at an exceptional moment, falsehood can do that office which Truth cannot do, of course without giving the least injury to any one, falsehood for the time being may (The words covey the idea that it is only a shift, like a gilt ornament for a really genuine gold one. It is no truth) occupy the place of truth. It will neither chide nor brand you, because no one suffers. And yet this is no sin as there is no equivocation in it as in "Aswathama Athah Kunjarah" of Krishna in the Bharata war.

Then follows Suppression of Anger. Suppressing your anger is really so only when you can do it where you can exercise your power and authority. What matter, if you check, or give it vent, where power you have none? As anger begets an endless train of evil, quench it: nip-it in the bud. He who guards not against wrath, him his wrath shall slay. The drift of the chapter for bidding evil to others concurs with the great precept of Jesus "All things whatsoever Ye would that men should do to you, do Ye even so to them".

> Whose soul has felt the bitter smart of wrong, how can
> He wrongs inflict on ever living soul of man.

Let us now proceed to gather some hints on morality from the many chapters of the Second Book on Wealth.

> 1.So learn that you may full or faultless learning gain;
> Then in obedience meet to lessons learnt remain.

2.Perceptions manifold in men are of the mind alone
The value of the man by his companionship is known.

and this reminds us of the English saying

"Tell me your companions and I shall tell you what you are"

3.Weigh well the good of each, his failings closely scorn,
As these or those prevail, so estimate the man's.

4.Of greatness and of meanness too
The deeds of each are touchstone true.

5.Whatever you ponder let your aim be lofty still,
Fate cannot hinder always thwart you as it will.

6.His family decays, and faults unheeded thrive
Who sunk in sloth, for noble objects does not strive.

Then on the Way of Earning Wealth

Their wealth, who blameless means can use right.
Is source of virtue and of choice delight
Wealth gained by loss of love and grace
Let man cast off from his embrace.

We then approach the chapters on Friendship

1.What so hard for men to gain a friendship true
What so sure defence 'gainst all that foe can do'.

2.It is not, for laughter but for reproof when
You stray from right that you befriend.

3.Mean is the friendship that men blazon forth
He's thus to me and 'such to him my worth'.

4.As hand of him whose vesture slips away
Friendship at once the coming grief will stay.

5.Buy at all cost the friendship of the good,
And sell away even at a loss that of the bad.

There are many other fine sayings on Friendship. But there are two couplets whose sublimity even Bacon will admire.

1.Not fully merely, but familiar carelessness
Esteem it, when your friends cause distress

2.To him who can neither receive as such, nor construct as such the injury inflicted by a friend, the day his friend offends will appear a day of grace.

Whoredom, Intoxication and Gambling are condemned wholesale.

1.As one in darkened room some stranger corpse in arms,
Is he who seeks delight in mercenary women's charms.

2.The drunkard's joy is sorrow to his mother's eyes
What must it be in presence of the truly wise.

3.Gambling is misfortune's other name over whom she
casts her veil
They suffer grievous want and sorrows sore bewail.

We have then of Greatness -

All men that live are one in circumstance of birth
Diversities of works give each his special worth.

The chapter on perfectness - consummation of all morality deserves special attention.

1.All goodly things are duties to the men, they say,
Who set themselves to walk in virtue's perfect way.

2.The good of inward excellence they claim
The perfect men, all other good is only good in name.

3.Love, modesty, beneficence, benignant grace,
With truth, are pillars five of perfect virtue's resting place.

4.The type of penitence is virtuous good that nothing slays;
To speak no ill of other men is perfect virtue's praise.

5.What fruit doth your perfection yield you, say!
Unless to men who work you ill you good repay?

6.Call them of perfect virtue's sea the shore,
Who, though the fates should fail, fail not for evermore.

Notwithstanding all his sublime morals, the venerable author would not revolutionize society. When you are at Rome, he would have you live as the Romans do.

As dwells the world, go with the world to dwell
In harmony - this is to wisely live and well.

Here is no danger, as in Tamil classics, world does not mean the masses, but denotes the wise.

From this rough bird's eye view of the Ethics of Kural, we find that the author is a cosmopolite - citizen of the world, except that he speaks and writes in Tamil. His work is of universal interest. It has found a home in England, France, Germany and Italy. Every sectarian in India - at least in Southern India, claims kindred with the author. The Christian missionary has gone so far as to call this grand system of morals, an Echo of the Sermon on the Mount. The rev. Drew, however, wrote in 1840 thus:- "The Kural has a strong claim upon our attention, as a part of the literature of the Country, and as a work of intrinsic excellence. The author, passing over what is peculiar to particular classes of society, and introducing such ideas only as are common to all, has avoided the uninteresting details of observances found in Manu and the other shastras: and thus in general maintains a dignified style. It cannot be supposed necessary for the sake of Christianity to deny to such works whatever degree of merit they may possess. Christianity requires not the aid of falsehood or of concealment. Nor need we wish to blacken the systems and books of the country beyond what truth will warrant. The Kural itself, esteemed the best book of morals written by a Hindu, is all illustration of this remark". And again M. Ariel, quoted in Rev. Pope's preface to his valuable Edition of The Kural, speaks of the work as 'one of the highest and purest expressions of human thought' and adds "That which above all is wonderful in the Kural is the fact that its author addresses himself, without regard to castes, peoples or beliefs, to the whole community of mankind;; the fact that he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason; that he proclaims in their very essence, in their eternal abstractness, virtue and truth;; that he presents as it were, in one group the highest laws of domestic and social life;; that he is equally perfect in thought, in language and in poetry, in the austere metaphysical contemplation of the great mysteries of the Divine nature, as in the easy and graceful analysis of the tenderest emotions of the heart". Rev. Pope calls him "the greatest Tamil classic author, who sung of so many topics 'touching

all things with poetic grace" and also asserts that "It is not probable that Tiruvalluvar translated a single sloka from Sanskrit. Kural is certainly not an anthology, but the perfect and most elaborate work of one master. The weaver of Mylapore was undoubtedly one of the great geniuses of the world. He is the venerated sage and lawgiver of the Tamil people of whom there are about ten millions inhabiting the central and southern carnatic", and sings of the author thus.

"Sage Valluvar, priest of thy lowly clan,
No tongue repeats, no speech reveals thy name;
Yet, all things changing, dieth not thy fame,
For thou art bard of universal man."

The religion of Valluvar is a puzzle to this day. Every couplet of his work is tight enough for elaboration into a sermon in any country for any religion. The author bases morality no doubt upon theology. A good or an evil action is a passport to heaven or hell. Even his invocation of the supreme Being does not give us a clue to his religion. His theology must, therefore, be only natural theology, and his religion only natural religion. Can it be otherwise with the bard who said that "Death is but sleep and birth but an awakening from it" which reminds us of Wordsworth's line in his ode on Intimations of Immortality

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star.
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness
And not in utter nakedness
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

Gentlemen, I am not a student of the Theory of morals. I cannot tell you precisely whether the author is an Intuitionist, Perfectionist or Hedonist. I leave the precision for theorists, though I am inclined to call the venerable sage a utilitarian - Perfectionist

on the whole, for he insists on the purity of mind, word and deed, for the happiness of all. Perfection of human nature is the be-all and end-all of Kural.

"In the world there is nothing great but man
In man there is nothing great but mind" *

said somebody. Our author would add

In mind there is nothing great but moral perfection.

Is there any body in the world who would raise his voice against the moral perfection of man? What is any religion but a dull sermon on this perfection? The lives of great men and saints are but a commentary on this. A parliament of religions cannot have a better subject for discussion. The summum bonum of Education cannot have any other aspiration. This doctrine of perfection of human nature is the essence of the Ethics of Kural. A study of Sanskrit opened a high road to the region of Philology. A study of Kural may open another to the region of comparative morality, and thus pave a way for the long dreamed Universal brotherhood of man. Before I resume my seat let me make one humble bow to the Prince of Moralists.

* The above verses are quoted from the excellent Oxford edition of Rev.Dr.G.U.Pope,M.A.,D.D.

THE LIGHT OF TRUTH OR SIDDHANTA DEEPIKA

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3

THE KURAL

The Rev. Dr. J. Lazarus

By way of introduction it may be stated at the outset that the Kural is a Tamil poem on ethical subjects, held in the highest estimation by the Tamil people. No less than twelve commentaries have been written on this work by men representing different religious sects of Hinduism: the one written by the Brahman Parimelalagar[1] being the most popular. The text itself is simple and readily yields its meaning to the diligent student. But as there is a "pleasure in poetic pains which only poets know," so in this matchless piece of poetic effort, there are depths of thought and heights of moral excellence which can only be perceived by those endowed with a sense for the true and the beautiful in life. Though universally known and frequently quoted, the Kural is not studied as intensely as it ought to be by the Tamil people. A few foreigners, however, have bestowed on its study a considerable amount of labour, time and thought. Among Frenchmen M Ariel, among Italians Father Beschi the greatest European Tamil scholar, among Germans Dr. Graul and among Englishmen Ellis, Drew, Robinson and Pope, have rendered valuable service by publishing partial or complete translations of the Kural and thus introducing it to the learned public of Europe. Mr. Drew carried his

translation to the end of the 63rd Chapter and the writer of this paper may be pardoned for adding that he was the first to publish a prose rendering of the remaining seventy chapters. The late Dr. Bower was quite familiar with the poet, but unfortunately he did not commit to writing the results of his critical and life-long study of this great work. In his valuable Dravidian Comparative Grammar the late lamented Bishop Caldwell refers particularly to the Kural as the most ancient extant Tamil work and fixes the date of its composition at a period previous to the ninth century. This conjecture, however, has since been indisputably proved to be incorrect by Scholars who have investigated the subject with the light of literature and epigraphy. The late Professor Sundaram Pillai and Kanakasabai Pillai and Mr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyengar, M.A. M.R.A.S., have shown that Tiruvalluvar flourished in the Tamil Augustan Age, i.e., in the first or the early year of the second century. The Kural is quoted in the Epics whose dates have been ascertained by internal evidence and contemporaneous history to have been in the second century.

With these introductory, we may proceed to consider more fully the authorship, style and subject-matter of the work before us. Very little is known regarding the author of the Kural. His very name has not been handed down to posterity. From time immemorial he has been described as Tiruvalluvar, the sacred Pariah priest. The Pariahs are divided into eighteen tribes, at the head of which stands the Valluvan. He is their priest, soothsayer and doctor. Unlike the hut of the Pariah, the Valluvan's house is quite close to, if not on the very border of or just within, the 'village' proper and not in the cheri itself. He wears a thread like the twice born. His services as a doctor and astrologer are in great demand among the higher castes, who treat him with respect and receive him into their houses. With reading and writing, he is more or less familiar, while he repeats by rote a great deal of current learning and common mantras. His general appearance is so neat that even a practised eye fails to see the Pariah in him. To this tribe then did the author of the

Kural belong. And twenty centuries ago when the caste lines of demarcation were not so rigidly drawn as they are now, Tiruvalluvar must have enjoyed greater facilities for education, and more familiar intercourse with peoples of other classes, than is the case at present with his down-trodden castemen. A later tradition, however, makes the poet a son of a Brahman father and a Pariah mother, - evidently a foolish attempt to improve on the humble though purer ancestry of the Tamil bard. The words Adi Bagavan occur in the first distich of the Kural as an epithet of the Deity; and though the tradition would make it appear that Adi was the mother and Bagavan the father of the poet, it has utterly failed to alter the descriptive name of the poet, which still continues to be Valluvar.

The poet lived at St. Thome or Mylapur, the southern suburb of Madras, and earned his livelihood as a weaver. How a Valuvan could take to working at the loom, is to us somewhat surprising. And surprising as this may be, it is still more surprising how a Valluvan weaver could win the hand of a Vellala maid of Cavripauk. But so it was two thousand years ago. The poet is also said to have enjoyed the friendship and patronage of one Elasingan, a wealthy merchant of St. Thome who belonged to the Karaya or Parava community, owned vessels and had trade with foreign countries. With his wife Vasuki, therefore, the poet seems to have spent the greater portion of his life in this 'town of peacocks', as the name Mylapore signifies, and gathered the materials for his immortal work, having probably as his contemporaries the Pandiyan Ugra-peru-valudi, Chancellor of the third academy in Madura and the Roman Emperor Claudius I, conqueror of Britain.[2]

But whence did the poet gather his materials? This is an important question and no less interesting. The most natural source must have been the vast literature of the Sangam period. And life in his time must, of course, have afforded his genius ample food for thought and reflection. Not far from his village

was the Chola Kingdom invariably in alliance with the Pandyas of the south. The follies and vices of the Kings, the early training and education of the Princes, the intrigues of their courts, the varied gifts and tactics of the Ministers, the frequent wars which laid the states in ruins, the contests of warriors who combated with the courage and skill of gladiators, the frequency of famines and epidemics, could not but have filled the poet's mind with anxious thoughts regarding royal rectitude and the well-being of kingdoms. The Kural also bears testimony to the fact that the 'worker at the loom' was a close observer of life in its more familiar and humbler walks. The ascetic and the house-holder, the gambler and the drunkard, the farmer and the idler, the wedded husband and the unwedded lover, the devoted wife and the mercenary prostitute, the host and the guest, and parents and children do not escape the activity of his mind or the keenness of his eyes. Even nature, animate as well as inanimate, is laid under contribution. The roaring sea of St. Thome beating with its creamy surf on the palmgrown shore, the hills and lakes, the brooks and rives, the *topes* and groves in his neighbourhood, the flowers and herbs, the plants and shurbs, with the birds and animals of his country, the poet summons to his aid as he clothes moral 'dry bones' with life and beauty.

It is most likely that Tiruvalluvar with his active mind ever in quest of knowledge and bent on discerning truth from error, must have visited the third and last surviving University or College of Madura, and witnessed the hair-splitting controversies of the proud arbiters of learning in that ancient seat of Shen-Tamil. The rival schools of religion and philosophy which were in his time fast developing into rival sects, the spread of Buddhism and the decline of Jainism, the unsuitability of the Vedic and Brahmanic cult to the simple tastes of the Dravidian farmer, the moral worthlessness of rites and ceremonies, - these the poet had carefully scrutinized and found utterly useless for the system he was daily elaborating in his humble cottage.

It is often urged, and with considerable force, that at least for the purer moral sentiments of the Kural, the poet is indebted to Christianity. "We may fairly picture him," writes Dr. Pope, the latest advocate of this theory, "walking along the sea-shore with the Christian teachers, and imbibing Christian ideas, tinged with the peculiarities of the Alexandrian School, and day by day working them into his own wonderful Kural." But the Kural betrays no traces of distinctively Christian ideas or ethics such as may be ascribed to Christ or His Apostles alone. *None of the ten epithets by which the Deity is described in the opening chapter of the Kural have the remotest connection with Christ or God, that is to say, as they are designated in the Bible.* The chapter on Killing deals exclusively with the literal taking away of life. That on love is quite different from the Apostle's eulogium in 1 Cor. xiii. Of course here and there, there are similarities of expression, nay even identical moral sentiments, but this is quite natural; for human nature is the same everywhere, and even oceans cannot separate kindred souls or moral instincts. Of one thing, however, we may be certain. In his daily intercourse with the Christians of Mylapore, which is quite probable, the poet must have observed the superior sanctity and attractiveness of the Christian home, which may have contributed in no small degree to the beautiful picture he has given us of a Tamil family.

When the work was completed the poet repaired, we are told, to Madura to secure for it the imprimatur of the College of Pandits there. It is said that at first the haughty professors, refused to review it. The author thereupon requested permission to place it in their 'divine seat' which was then afloat in a tank. The request was granted. But the seat immediately contracted itself to the size of the book and threw the professors into the tank. Shorn of all figure, the account means, that, though it was far from easy for the humble poet to get his work acknowledged by the southern luminaries as one of intrinsic merit, his ultimate triumph was complete.

The poet's life was a poem in itself. The concurrent voice of various traditions bears testimony to the happy and exemplary life he led with his beloved Vasuki. She it was who had sat for the poet's portrait of the ideal wife. A pattern of perfect obedience and devoted virtue, she had never during her whole married life, questioned her lord's command. The night on which she died, the poet was heard to utter the following pathetic lines:

> O thou loving one, O sweet'ner of my food,
> O wife who ne'er transgressed my word,
> Who did'st chafe my feet, rising first and sleeping last,
> O when will these eyes know sleep again!

Vasuki's death affected the sage so deeply that he soon secluded himself from society and devoted the rest of his life to religious contemplation. At his death, his body was, according to his expressed desire, exposed in the open air outside the town to be devoured by crows.

"Though dead he yet speaketh." To think is to live; and he by whom the reality and responsibility of life on earth was thought out in all its manifold bearings and aspects, still lives in the loving memory of millions. The despised Pariah has been raised to the highest pinnacle to which in the opinion of Hindus mortal man can rise: the Valluvan has become a god: he is regarded as an incarnation of Brahma. Brahman and Non-Brahman alike raise their hands in devout worship to this 'divine teacher'. Twenty centuries have not diminished the weight of his authority or the vitality of his utterances. He lives, and his fame will increase with the flight of time; and so long as men continue to revere the true and the good so long will the words of the poet continue to inspire them, and gain him a seat with the great teachers of the world.

The Kural then is the work which this great teacher has bequeathed to posterity. Like its author, the work too is nameless. The name by which it is known, is simply the name of the metre in which it is composed. Several Tamil poets have since followed our poet's example, and named their works after their respective metres.

The word Kural means short. The root is Kur, a purely Tamil primitive. But it has its cognates in Sanskrit and other Aryan languages, and is one of the many distinctively Tamil roots which unmistakably prove the hoary antiquity of the language and its intimate connection with some pre-Aryan tongue from which the Aryan, Semitic and Tamilian families are generally held to have descended. But as applied to Tiruvalluvar's work, the term signifies a shortened form of the metre called Venba. For the Venba consists of four lines while the Kural, or Kural-Venba, as it is properly termed consists but of two. And it is quite probable that the poet's genius invented this couplet form as being the best fitted to convey his thoughts in the briefest form to his countrymen. It approaches the Sanskrit sloka, but is capable of clothing a perfect syllogism. The first line of each Kural contains four feet, and the second, three. With the exception of the seventh or last foot, the others may consist of two or three metrical syllables. And thus by a most skilful combination of these two kinds of feet (for which western prosody has no generic names), involving an endless variety of accent - of spondees and iambuses, trochees and dactyls and a corresponding variety of rhythm and pause, with a judicious introduction of rhyme and alliteration as well as a careful selection of soft and hard consonants, - the poet plays on his two-stringed harp with matchless powers and grace, and adapts his notes to every mood of mind or emotion of heart he desires to awaken in our souls.

Both critic and commentator unite in saying that the object of the Kural is to enable men to live, that is to say, live in the truest and highest sense, reminding us, very feebly it may be, of the words of Jesus who says, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." And from the Kural itself it may be gathered that while modern science defines life as a struggle against death, Tiruvalluvar by anticipation defines it as a struggle against the "sevenfold births."

In carrying out this great purpose the poet naturally treads in the path of Indian philosophers, and undertakes to write on the well-known four great themes, viz., Virtue, Wealth, Pleasure and Heaven. The last being beyond the pale of human knowledge and experience, he wisely omits; though incidentally he approaches it elsewhere with great yearning of soul.

The plan of the Kural, therefore, is briefly as follows: first an Introduction of four chapters, followed by thirty-four on Virtue, practised by both the domestic and the ascetic; seventy on Wealth, earned both by the state and citizen; with twenty-five on Pleasure, enjoyed by unwedded lovers ending in conjugal life; making in all 133 chapters. Each chapter contains ten couplets. Thus there are altogether 1,330 distiches in the Kural. The late Mr. Scott of Madura recently published an edition of it with a re-arrangement of the plan and what he considered to be the necessary emendations of the text. But time will soon shew that it was a futile attempt. The Kural cannot be improved nor its plan made more perfect. It is a perfect mosaic in itself. The slightest change in the size, shape or colour of a single stone would mar the beauty of the whole. "Complete in itself," to quote the words of Dr. Pope, "the sole work of its author, it has come down the stream of ages absolutely uninjured, - hardly a single various reading of any importance being found."

Before proceeding to consider the poet's treatment of each of these grand topics, we must dwell very briefly on the Introduction. The four chapters treat respectively of God, Rain, Virtue and Ascetics and form a fitting type of the whole. The very first couplet on God, which is also the first in the whole work, is characteristic of the man and marks him out as a shining monotheist in those dark ages.

> As all letters have A for their first,
> So the world has the Eternal God for its first.

Thus does the Valluvan begin his great work. In other words, the poet would join hands with Moses and say, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This is the nearest Indian parallel to Christian cosmogony. Rain finds a place in the Introduction, because then as now, it was indispensable to the well-being of mankind. The fact that eight out of ten distiches describe the evils of drought, indicates the frequency of famines even in the poet's days. The chapter on Virtue, or

Righteousness in Scriptural language is well worth study. He says:-

> To be spotless in mind is alone virtue,
> All else is evanescent show.
> That alone is pleasure which flows from virtue.

The poet defines virtue and vice thus:-

> Virtue is what ought to be done,
> And vice what one ought to shun.

A careful perusal of the Kural will shew that in dealing with Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure, the poet takes up types of the greatest excellence in each department. The householder and the ascetic in the first, the king and the citizen in the next, and conjugal bliss in the last are selected as leading ideals in the treatment and development of each of these subjects. The headings of the twenty-three chapters devoted to the portrayal of domestic virtue form, as it were, the main features of an excellent portrait. The householder, married not to a child-wife but to a frugal woman who is a meet help to his consecrated life, rejoices in the careful training of his children, through loving whom he learns to love his neighbour, is hospitable, given to kindly speech, grateful for benefits received, strictly just and upright in all his dealings, moderate and self-restraining, decorous in behaviour, faithful unto his wife, forgiving and forbearing, avoiding envy, covetousness, evil-speaking, even profitless gossiping, dreading evil deeds, always placing duty supreme, giving to the poor and preserving his good name. I doubt very much if anything could be added to enhance the beauty of this picture, especially as each of these features undergoes further and still finer touches from the poet's pencil. Sir Alex. Grant states that "humility, charity and forgiveness of injuries are not described by Aristotle." But it is these very qualities which are so forcibly and frequently inculcated by this Tamil bard. It is only the pen of a Drummond that could adequately bring to light the hidden beauty of his chapter on Love. One or two extracts will suffice:-

> He alone lives who loves.
> Nothing can restrain love.
> The tiny tear will betray it.

To these may be added one from the chapter on Forbearance:

> Forgiving trespasses is good always,
> Forgetting them hath even higher praise.

The substance of the first couplet in chapter on Giving is simply "Tis more blessed to give than to receive."

Ascetics seem to have formed an important and revered class in the poet's days. For their guidance, therefore he lays down a special code, which might be called the higher virtue. In this section, certain virtues and observances are treated of. Taking away life and flesh-eating are condemned, while benevolence , veracity and the like are commended. Referring to veracity, the poet says that "falsehood may be regarded as truth, if it yields guiltless good." This is the only instance in which the moralist leaves the intuitional platform and takes his stand on utilitarian ground. At all events, he acted up to his light.

The Jains claim the poet as belonging to their sect, because of his restrictions against killing and flesh - eating. But this cannot justify their claim. In these restrictions, he is laying down the law for the ascetic, not the ordinary house holder. Besides people were mostly vegetarians then, as they are now; probably much more so. The abhorrence of flesh eating and the slaughter it involves is common even now among vegetarians. And the poet simply gives expressions to public opinion in this respect without necessarily attaching himself to the Jains or to their system of theology. And the only two allusions to be found in the Kural, - one to Indra and the other to Vishnu under the epithet Tirumal - could not have been acceptable to the Jains who disbelieved the myths alluded to. On the other hand, Tiruvalluvar seems to have been an eclectic philosopher, carefully discarding everything which had not a rational or moral basis. It is true he refers to Fate and Transmigration. But the former he regards in nearly the same light as Christian

Providence, while the latter he seems to have accepted as a temporary solution of the problem of life. But as I have already remarked, escape from this "sea of seven - fold births" is the burden of his work.

We now come to wealth, the second part of the Kural. The king with equipped state and the law-abiding citizen are the types in this section of the work. The moral courage with which the humble poet ventures to frame laws for the well-being of the Chera, Chola and Pandyan kingdoms is certainly wonderful. It reminds one of the Jewish prophets of old. The poet perceived that if he could lay down certain general principles the observance of which would be conducive to the material welfare of the state, their application to individuals and families would be apparent. And hence this section of the Kural is an exquisite poem on political economy, or the wealth of nations. It is on this section that the poet brings to bear his learning, his observation and his unerring judgement. In the seventy chapters of this part, a great variety of topics is treated of with the same force and beauty which characterize the former portion. Kingly greatness, learning, observation, good associations, deliberation, misplaced confidence, fortitude under affliction, power in speech and purity in deed, thought-reading, tact in society, are some of the qualities he enlarges upon as being essential ingredients in what might be called a public man. The essentials of a state are then dwelt upon. It is here that we have the poet's beautiful chapters of Friendship, both good and bad. One or two couplets may be quoted:

> The friendship of the wise increases like the waxing moon;
> That of fools diminishes like the waning moon.
>
> True friendship dwells, not in the sweet smiles of the face,
> But in the sincere smiles of the heart.
>
> Seek to gain the friendship of the pure;
> But renounce even with a gift that of all others.

A whole chapter is devoted to conscientiousness. Here are a few epigrammatic quotations:

> Food, clothing and the like are common to all;
> But conscientiousness is peculiar to the good.
>
> The conscientious will rather lose their life for their conscience,
> Than lose their conscience for their life.

"The poor," said Christ, "ye have always with you." It was so indeed in Tiruvalluvar's times. He too, in last chapters, speaks of poverty and begging; the latter, however, he condemns. He says,

> Even thin gruel is ambrosia to him
> Who has earned it by labour.

With reference to royal greatness he says,

> He is a lion among kings who possesses
> An army, people, wealth, minister, friend and fort.

There are some beautiful verses on Fortitude. For example,

> He has no sorrow in sorrow,
> Who seeks no ple\asure in pleasure.
>
> Sorrow flees before him
> Who can tickle trouble into joy.

Regarding sins of omission and commission, the following I think cannot be surpassed:

> He dies who does what is not meet;
> He also dies who does not what is meet.

Indeed, such verses are so very numerous that it is difficult to make a selection. And translation is often a hopeless task. The words indeed may be rendered, and to a great extent , the sentiments also. But to reproduce the beauty, the rhythm and the terseness of a couplet is simply impossible. The translator must himself be a poet. As has been well remarked, each couplet is, as it were "an apple of gold in a network of silver."

The third part of the Kural, that on Pleasure, has been much animadverted upon. Fifty years ago Mr. Drew said that it could not be translated without "exposing the translator to infamy." Public opinion, however, has greatly changed since that time. Dr. Graul has not only rendered it into German and Latin, but has said something in praise of its intrinsic excellence. The fact is, as I have already pointed out, the poet choose types and ideals for the elucidation of his themes. When about to explain the nature of true pleasure, he perceives with the Christian poet that domestic felicity is the "only bliss that has survived the Fall." Even the Apostle Paul could find no better analogy for the union of Christ and His church than that of wedded love. Dr. Pope thinks "he will be regarded as having done good service" in translating it. It was one of the couplets in this part of the poem, referring to the two looks of a maid - the one which kills and the other which cures the looker - that led Dr. Graul to admire Tamil poetry and study the Kural.

At the same time it must not be forgotten that ancient writers were far less reserved in their style of writing on such subjects than is the case with modern authors; and that almost all eastern literature is, more or less, tainted with an excess of liberty in this particular. Still, it must be stated to the credit of the poet that this section is perfectly pure in its tendency, though its style is different from that of the other portions. It embodies no rules for conduct. On the contrary by a few scintilations of poetic fancy, it aims at giving the reader a vivid though distant glimpse of the perfect bliss of conjugal life. It consists mainly of soliloquies and dialogues, and embraces unwedded as well as wedded love for both forms of union were permitted in the poet's days. But of the twenty-five chapters, only eight are devoted to unwedded love - thus indicating the decided opinion of the poet who in the eighth chapter makes the unwedded union end in wedded love. A few couplets may be quoted in illustration of what has been said:

Ah, woe is me! my might that awed my foeman in the fight,
By lustre of that beaming brow borne down lies broken now.

I look, but her eyes are on the ground the while;
I look away and she looks on me with timid smile.

If it is not parting, speak to me; but if 'tis quick return,
Speak to those who can survive till then.

Like the eye which sees not the pencil which paints it
I cannot see my beloved's faults when I meet him

But, it may be asked, may this portion be read by the young? I should say, no; no more than other eastern books, including even certain portions of the Old Testament, can be placed in their hand without injuring their immature minds.

We have thus cast a hasty glance at the contents of this remarkable work. It now remains to offer a few remarks on its general style and language. The Kural is composed in the purest Tamil. In about 12,000 words which the poet has employed to convey his thoughts, there are scarcely fifty of Sanskrit origin. He throws the purity of Bunyan's English completely into the shade. No known Tamil work can even approach the purity of the Kural. It is a standing rebuke to modern Tamil. Tiruvalluvar has clearly proved the richness melody and power of his mother-tongue. And while the composition of a master-piece like the Kural so many centuries ago demonstrates the great antiquity and careful culture of the Tamil language, it is sad to reflect on the condition to which this great vehicle of thought has degenerated in these days with neither poet to sing, nor moralist to teach, - especially when during this same period a new language - that of Great Britain - has arisen and developed into a perfect tongue and bids fair ere long to occupy the greater part of the globe.

Regarding the Kural as a whole, there is but one opinion as to its surpassing excellence. Both European and Indian have written in the highest praise of it. In a little work, usually attached to native editions of the Kural, and called the Garland of

Tiruvalluvar, there are fifty-three verses attributed to the discomfited professors of the Madura Sangam or College in each of which very variety of hyperbole is exhausted by the author in his praise of the poem and the poet. The latter is called God, the first of poets, the divine poet, Brahma, Lakshmi's consort, etc.; while the former is termed the Triple Treatise, the Later Veda, the World of God, the Word of Truth, the Tamil Vedam, and the World's Book. One of these critics says of it what it is a semi-perforated mustard seed into which the poet has emptied the contents of the seven seas. He refers of course to its *multum in parvo* characteristic. Most of these critics also refer to the chapters as well as sections as these have come down to us. One of these verses discloses that the poet flourished in the reign of Ugra-peru-Valudi, a Pandyan king, whose date is to be sought in the beginning of our era.

A European estimate of this work cannot be out of place here. Dr. Barth in his "Religions of India" refers to it as that "admirable collection of stanzas in the Tamil language which is instinct with the purest and most elevated religious emotion." M. Ariel, the French translator, calls it "the master-piece of Tamil literature"; and adds, "that which above all is wonderful in the Kural is the fact that its author addresses himself, without regard to castes, people or beliefs, to the whole community of mankind; the fact that he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason; that he proclaims in their very essence, in their eternal abstractness, virtue and truth; that he presents, as it were, in one group, the highest laws of domestic and social life; that he is equally perfect in thought, in language, and in poetry, in the austere metaphysical contemplation of the great mysteries of the Divine nature, as in the easy and graceful analysis of the tenderest emotions of the heart." Yes, it is a wonderful work, second only to that other Eastern literature which has received the impress of the Divine mind. Tiruvalluvar seldom discusses; he speaks with authority; his utterances are all *ex cathedra*. All his appeals are to the human conscience straight and direct. In the Veda, in the Code of Manu, and in the great Epics, the chief aim is the

exaltation of the Brahmin; in the Kural, it is the exaltation of man as such, the race as a whole. The very ideal of the perfect man which he presents, according to the light he has received from Him "who lighteth every man that cometh in to world," cannot fail to inspire men of any creed or clime with purer motives for conduct and nobler aspirations for life.

The one great defect of the kural - and it is one which belongs to every unaided human effort - is its conception of God. It is true the poet does not speculate: but he oscillates between the personal and impersonal idea in the solitary chapter he devotes to the "praise of God." In one couplet he speaks of God as one devoid of desire and aversion, in another he gives Him eight attributes, while in a third he calls Him the destroyer of the five senses. It could not have been otherwise. The poet, though a giant in the moral world was after all a child in the spiritual, with his foot on its threshold "seeking the Lord if haply he might feel after Him and find Him." "'Tis Revelation alone satisfies all doubts." In the chapter on Renunciation, there is a remarkable verse in which the yearning soul seems to gain a glimpse of the faith by which the "Just shall live." It runs thus:

> "Cling to that which He to whom
> Nought clings, hath bid thee cling.
>
> And cling to the bond to free thyself
> From every clinging thing."

In other words, the poet would say, "To get rid of sin, cling in faith to the Sinless One."

In conclusion, it is refreshing to think that a nation which has produced so great a man and so unique a work cannot be a hopeless, despicable race. The morality he preached could not have grown except on the essentially moral soil. To those therefore who labour for the salvation of the Tamil people, the Kural must be a work of peculiar, nay, intense interest. To move, to persuade, to convince the poet's countrymen, the popular reformer or preacher must be perfectly familiar with the Kural,

so that from their own vedam they may be led to seek that ideal, perfect Man, whom not having seen but instinctively feeling after, the poet has sought to sketch in his immortal work, which, in the words of an ancient Tamil critic is,

> Sweet to the thought, sweet to the ear,
> Sweet to the mouth, and which with tongue
> Right eloquent, Tiruvalluvar set forth,
> That we the way of good may know.

NOTES

1. (Parimelalagar is now-a-days considered as a Brahman, because he was a Sanskrit scholar, and a native of Conjiveram as the Thondamandala Chadagam - a work scarcely of any value for historical purposes - would have it. But according to the traditional account Kadayam was his birth place and Pungavar-nattam his residence, where he spent the major portion of his life. Both these villages are in the district of Tinnevelly; the former situated on the bank of the Thambraparni to the west of Tinnevelly and the latter in Karisal - Kadu (black cotton-soil) to the north of Tinnevelly. A wealthy and munificent land-lord of the village Pungavar-nattam by name Veli-kanda Nadar was his patron. Parimelalagar himself was of the same caste as his patron - a Santar, and belonged to the Gurukkal family of the community. The site of his house is still discernible in the northernmost portion of the village. He was named parimelalagar after the God-Siva of Madura who, according to the Stala-purana, appeared on horse-back as an Arabian horse-trader to save Manikkavacagar from the oppression of his king, the Pandya Arimardhana. (Alagar, Chockar and Sundarar are but synonymous, meaning "the graceful", and pari-mel. "mounted on horse.") Parimelalagar was by religion a Saivite and the date of this able commentator of the Kural is about the 15th century A.D. and from his commentary we have to infer, he came after the great Nachchinarkkiniyar.

   Parimelalagar had a son by name Kumarasami Gurukkal, who was also a poet and a scholar and has left behind him a work "Adiramayanam" - an allegorical treatise composed in verse. It is still preserved in cadjan leaves under the custody of one of the surviving descendants of the ancient and famous Veli-kanda Nadar. A clear and remarkable account of the descent of Parimelalagar the Editor chanced to gather from an old lady who according to her own account was the last descendant of Parimelalagar. This good old lady was living some 15 yeas ago at Iral a petty but flourishing village of the Samiar community near Ettaiyapuram and not far from the said Punguvar-nattam. She was then about 90 years old and although she had lost her sight possessed a clear head and a noble heart. ....
   She was held in great esteem by the villagers on account of her old age and virtuous character, besides her being a member of the Gurukkal family. With her the noble line of Parimelalagar terminates. To the

information as to the existence of this old lady at Iral, the Editor owes his sincere thanks to the villagers of Pungavar-nattam. Branches of this Gurukkal family are at present found at Iral, kadayam, Padukkapattu (near Kulasekhara Pattinam) Kachchina-vilai (near Alwar-tirunagari) and in some of the villages of Nanjil-Nadu (South Travancore). The members of this family invaribly bear the title of "Aiya" or "Aiyar". This is a hereditary title owned, from time immemorial, by the community to which the great Parimelalagar belonged. Perhaps this has led the modern literary world as well as the late talented Bishop, Dr. Caldwell, to shift Parimelalagar from the Santar (சான்றார்) community and place him in a Brahman environment - Editor T.A.)

2. When Tiruvalluvar submitted his Kural to the Sangam Critics, the reigning sovereign in Madura was Ugra-Pandiyan, victor over the "Big Forest Fort" (Kana-per-epil) of Vengai-Marban. Avvai, who is claimed as the sister of Valluvar and who was one of the three celebrities of the time - the other two being Kapilar and Paranar - has sung the praise of this Pandiyan and his two friends, the Cholan Perunarkilli and Cheran Mavenko. Both Kapilar and Paranar of the 'Great trio' and another poet of no less fame known by the name of Perumkuntur-Kilar, have sung the praise of Vaiyaviko-perum-Pegan, a chief of the Vellala caste, whose daughter was given in marrige to Cheral-Athan-Chelva-kadumko, whom Kapilar has sung in the VIIth section of the "Ten Tens" and whose son Cheral-Athan-Vana-varamban became the son-in-law of Karikala I. Another king sung by Paranar and Perumkuntur-kilar is Cholan Ilanjed-chennai, father of Karikala I. From this we may infer that the contemporary kings of Pandiyan Ugra-peru-Valudi alias Ugra-Pandiyan were the Cholas - Perunarkilli and ilanjed - chenni (brothers elder and younger respectively as the name suggests), and the Cheras - Mavenko and Chelva - kadumko (probably brothers) and the Count Perum-Pegan.

From the "Epic of the Anklet" we learn that, in the beginning of the 2nd Century A.D., the reigning kings of the three Tamil Kingdoms were Pandiyan Nedum-cheliyan, Cholan Nedumudi-killi and Cheran Chenkuttu-van - the contemporaries of the Ceylon King Gajabahu I. Chenkuttuvan was a prominent figure of the day; he was the son of Cheral-Athan Vanavaramban above referred to and Nedu-mudi-killi (son of Karikala I) was his maternal uncle. Pandiyan Nedumcheliyan, the then ruling king of Madura, is known by the epithet the "Conqueror of the Aryan Army", thus distinguishing him from his predecessor of the same name, the "Hero of Alanganam". We find no mention in the "Epic of the Anklet" or its sequel "The Jewel Belt" regarding the existence of the academy at the time, nor do we find any Sangam-poet singing the glories of this "Conqueror of the Aryan Army". And we know Avvai and Kapilar have already passed away from the scene. Mr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, M.A., in his learned article, "The Augustian

Age of Tamil Literature", is inclined to think that of the Pandyan Ugra-peru-Valudi was "no other than the ill-starred Pandyan Nedum-Cheliyan of the "Epic of the Anklet;" and the late Kanakasabhai Pillai, the learned author of the "Tamils 1800 years Ago" places Ugra-Pandiyan as the third in succession after the Nedum-Cheliyan referred to in the Epic. Their conclusions, we fear, are not sufficiently warranted by facts. We have noted above that Ugra-peru-Valudi was a contemporary of Perunar-Killi and Ilanjed-Chenni and thus an ancestor of the "ill-starred" Pandiyan Nedum - Cheliyan of the "Epic of the Anklet", who ordered the execution of the innocent Kovalan.

Chenkuttuvan is said to have reigned 50 years and his date falls between A.D.95 and 145. He was the grandson (daughter's son) of Karikala the Great, whose age is fixed as 50 to 90 A.D. Thus the age of Ilanjed Chenni, father of Karikala, and his contemporary ugra-peru-Valudi should probably be fixed between 30 and 50 A.D. This is the age of the Kural, when our Valluvar, the Prince of Moralists, produced it to the Professors of the last Academy presided by Ugra-Pandiyan. This Ugra Pandiyan should either be identified with Nedum Cheliyan of the Alanganum fame, 'who was far and near terror to his enemies', or, be his immediate successor. For we learn from the Sangam works that Cheran Mantharam Cheral Irumpori, who engaged in a war with Perunar-killi, was captured by this Nepolean of the Ancient Madura and subsequently escaped. We have already pointed out that Perunar-killi, and Ugra Peruvaludi were contemporaries and friends. Mr. Kanakasabhai Pillai is far from correct in placing these potentates after Cheran Chenkuthuvan, contemporary of Gajabahu I of Ceylon, in his "Tamils 1800 years Ago." Ed.T.A.)

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THE KURAL

V.V.S. AIYAR

Very few in the world outside of the Tamil country have heard the name of the poet whose work is presented here in a new English garb. And yet he is one of those seers whose message in intended not merely for their own age or country but all time and for all mankind. Born a member of one of the depressed castes[1] and'bred up to the profession of weaving, which was his only means of livelihood till the day came for him to renounce all worldly ties, Tiruvalluvar has given to the world a work to which, in perfection of form, profundity of thought, nobleness of sentiment, and earnestness of moral purpose, very few books outside the grand scriptures of humanity can at all be compared. Indeed his work is eulogised by the Tamil people as the **Tamil Veda**, the **Universal Veda**, the **later Veda**, the **Divine book** etc., etc. It is a great pity that such a treasure should have been confined for so many ages only to one single people even in Hindusthan.

The translation that I offer here is not the first translation of this *chef d'oeuvre* in a European language. More than a century and a half ago the famous Jesuit missionary, Constantius Beschi, who lived in the Tamil country for 42 years, translated the first two parts of the book into Latin. This translation was available

only in manuscript until the Rev. G.U. Pope printed it in the appendix to his edition. It is this manuscript that Dr. Graul is said to have used for his translations of the Kural into German as well as Latin. F.W. Ellis, W.H. Drew, E.J. Robinson, J. Lazarus and the late Rev. G.U. Pope have made translation into English of the whole or portions of the book at various dates between 1820 and 1886. M. Ariel and M.de Dumast have translated some stray portions of the book into French. M. Ariel refers to a translation of the book into French by some author about 1767 which is to be found in the *Bibliotheque Nationale* of Paris, While he himself has published a French translation of part III. M. Lamairesse has more recently published a complete translation in the same language, which, however, is little better than a bad paraphrase. More recently Mrs. Tirunavukkarasu is said to have published some years ago a diary on every page of which is to be found the English translation of a maxim of the Kural.

As to the English translations with which we are more nearly concerned here, the edition jointly brought out by Drew and the great Ramanuja Kavirayar is an excellent one, but it goes only up to 63 chapters out of total of 133, and it goes out of print. The only complete English edition that was available till recently was Dr. Pope's. He had given the Tamil text with his English translation of each verse below the text, had added a large number of valuable notes, and had prepared a combined lexicon and concordance which was very useful to the Tamil student. And what was more, he had printed in his notes the translations, so far as they were available, of Beschi and Ellis, and earned the thanks of all lovers of Tiruvalluvar.

After seeing the English, French, and Latin translations above mentioned except those of Robinson and Lazarus and Graul and that of the *Bibliotheque Nationale*, my long cherished desire to make an independent translation of the great master into English only grew the stronger, and the result is the book which I am able to place before the public today.

After a great deal of thought on the subject I have come to the conclusion that the Authorised English Version of the Bible is the proper model to be followed by the translator of the Kural. The resemblance of the thought and diction of Tiruvalluvar to the great

master - pieces of the Bible, and especially to the Ecclesiasticus, the Proverbs and Wisdom of Solomon, and the Sermons of Jesus, struck me forcibly, and I thought that if any portion of the vigour of the Kural could be preserved in English, it could only be by adopting the phraseology and the turns of expression of the English version of the Hebrew and Greek Veda. The style of the English Bible lends itself, as everybody has felt, to the expression of every variety of thought, from the plain and the naive to the most sublime and dignified that the human mind can conceive. It would have been easy for Drew as well as Pope, who were Members of the Christian Church, to have adopted such a style for the translation of Tiruvalluvar. But, as it is, Drew has given but a feeble translation, while Dr. Pope's verses do not at all do justice to the merits of the original but on the contrary deform its grand thoughts by giving them a stilted and unnatural expression. The following examples will enable the reader to judge for himself:-

DREW'S TRANSLATION

Verse

336. This world possesses the greatness of one who Yesterday was and to-day is not.
351. Inglorious births are produced by the confusion (of mind) which considers those things to be real which are not real.
375. In the acquisition of property, every thing favourable becomes unfavourable, and (on the other hand) every thing unfavourable becomes favourable, (through the power of fate).
397. How it is that any one can remain without learning, even until his death, when (to the learned man(every country is his own (country) and every town his own (town)?
500. A fox can kill a fearless, warrior - faced elephant, if it go into mud in which its legs sink down.
581. Let a king consider as his eyes these two things, a spy, and a book (of laws) universally esteemed.

POPE'S TRANSLATION

Verse

336. Existing yesterday, to-day to nothing hurled! Such greatness owns this transitory world.

351. Of things devoid of truth as real things men deem;- Cause of degraded birth the fond delusive dream.

375. All things that good appear will oft have ill success; All evil things prove good for gain of happiness.

397. The learned make each land their own, in every city find a home;

 Who, till they die, learn nought, along what weary ways they roam!

500. The jackal slays, in miry paths of foot - betraying fen,

 The elephant of fearless eye and tusks transfixing armed men.

581. These two: the code renowned, and spies, In these let king confide as eyes.

713. Unversed in councils, who essays to speak, Knows not the way of suasive words, - and all is weak,

814. A steed untrained will leave in the tug of war; Than friends like that to dwell alone is better far.

1020. 'Tis as with strings a wooden puppet apes life's functions, when

 Those void of shame within hold intercourse with men.

1078. The good to those will profit yield fair words who use;

 The base like sugar-cane, will profit those who bruise.

1123. For her with beauteous brow, the maid I love, there place is none;

 To give her image room, O pupil of mine eye, bygone!

In the translation of the titles of chapters also Pope has been singularly unhappy in many instances. Thus the headings, The right sceptre power (48),[2] Knowing the place (50), The right sceptre (55), Power in speech (65), Power in action (67), The knowledge of indications (71), The might of hatred (87), Knowing the quality of hate (88), among others, are very unfortunate renderings of the original, and do not give the reader any idea of what is contained in the respective chapters. A comparison of the translations of the verses and chapter headings of Drew and Pope given above with those given in this book will show how much the former are lacking in force; and yet the latter do not render all the vigour and force of the original.

TIRUVALLUVAR

We know very little about the life of our poet. As in the case of so many of the world's greatest men of the past, we have only to make our own conjectures even as to the time at which he flourished. Tradition says that he lived at Mylapore, Madras, where he had a friend in a rich merchant captain of the name of Elela Shingan. This Shingan is described as the sixth descendant of a Chola prince who, according to the Mahavamsho of Ceylon, carried on a successful war against that island about the year 2960 of the Kali era. This would give the 32nd century of the Kali era, i.e. the 1st century A.D. as the probable date at which Tiruvalluvar flourished. Again, tradition declares that the Kural was published at the Madura College of poets in the reign of the Pandian Ugrapperuvaludi. Shriman M. Shrinivasa Aiyangar in his scholarly *Tamil Studies* gives the date of accession of this king tentatively as 125 A.D., i.e. the year 3227 K.A.[3]

Again, verse 55 of the Kural is quoted in Shilappadhikaram and Manimekhalai two great poems in theTamil language, which have been determined on other evidence to have been written about the first or second century A.D. We can there fore take it broadly that our poet flourished between the 32nd and 34th centuries of the Kali era. Shriman M. Raghava Aiyangar, writing

in his able work on Cheran Chen-Kuttuvan, has suggested the 5th century A.D. as the probable date of the two works above mentioned. But as it is admitted that the Kural is earlier in date than those two poems, this theory does not affect the limits above fixed for our Poet.

The very name of the poet is unknown to history, for the word Tiruvalluvar only means "the devotee of the Valluva caste." The Valluvas are pariahs who proclaim the orders and commands promulgated by the king, by beat of drum from the back of elephants. From an encomiastic stanza on the author which tradition has preserved, it appears that he was born at Madura, the capital of the Pandias. Tradition declares that he was the child of a Brahman father named Bhagavan and a pariah mother Adi who had been brought up by another Brahman and given in marriage to Bhagavan. Six other children are named as the issue of this union, all of whom have dabbled in poetry.

Not much else is known about Tiruvalluvar besides the following bare facts. He was a weaver in Mylapore, having chosen weaving as the most innocent of all professions. He lived a happy family life until the death of his wife Vasuki who was a model of every wifely virtue. Then he is said to have renounced the world and become an ascetic. A small book in the mysteries of wisdom, called *Jnanavetti*, is also attributed to him, but internal evidence and the evidence of style seem to point against his authorship of it.

The Tamil people love to tell stories about his married life, which may be true or may be false, but which certainly serve to show not only what was their conception of the ideal home but also that Tiruvalluvar's married life was in perfect agreement with the ideal as understood by them. Artless simplicity and unquestioning obedience to the husband are the first qualities that the East requires in the wife. Tiruvalluvar is said to have tested the faith of his prospective wife in him by asking her to boil and cook for him a handful of nailheads and other iron pieces. She took them in perfect faith and did as she was bid.

The poet felt that she was the proper helpmate for him and married her. The fame of the happiness of their married life spread far and wide. A sage once visited him in order to ascertain for himself the truth of the report and to ask him whether he would recommend marriage to him. Instead of answering the question directly, Tiruvalluvar wanted that the sage should draw his own conclusion after staying with him for some time. So he invited him to be his guest for a few days. One day as he and the guest were seated at their morning meal of cold rice and his wife was drawing water at the well in the yard, he called out to her saying that the rice was too hot for him to eat. Without questioning anything she left the water-pot even as she was drawing it up, and, hurrying to her husband's side, fanned the rice that was served on the leaf. Wonder of wonders. Steam rose from the cold rice as she fanned it and, what was still more miraculous, the pot that she had left to itself in order to obey her husband's call remained hanging in mid air in the same position in which she had left it! Another day, in broad day light, as he was working at his loom, Tiruvalluvar dropped the shuttle on the floor and called for a light to look for it. Vasuki lit a light and brought it to him without even the slightest consciousness of the unreasonableness of the request. The sage had received the Poet's answer: married life is the best even for scholars and searchers after truth if they can find a wife like Vasuki; otherwise they had better continue single all their life,

The verse that is said to have escaped the lips of our Poet on the death of her who was the helpmate of his peaceful domestic life, is of a pathetic interest. It is as follows:

O loving one! O thou who usedst to cook delicious dishes for me and who hast never disobeyed me! Who wouldst chafe my feet at night, and sleep after I had slept, and wake before I had waked! Art thou going away from me now. O artless one? When shall these eyes know sleep again?

These are abcut all the things that have come down to us regarding the life of one of the greatest geniuses of the world.

THE KURAL

Now as regards the work of the Master. It is divided into three parts, the first of which is devoted to Righteousness, the second to Politics, and the third to Love. These things together with Heavenly Bliss as the fourth, are called by Hindu writers as the Four Objectives of life. Tiruvalluvar does not treat of the fourth objective separately, and orthodox people say that he has submitted himself to the orthodox rule that none but a Brahman should be a teacher of spiritual truth. But the first Part of the Kural, and especially the second section of it, inculcates every principle the following of which leads to self-realisation, which is the highest happiness that can be enjoyed by man here or hereafter.

PART I-RIGHTEOUSNESS

Under the title of Righteousness our author treats of the life of the householder and of the life of the ascetic. Every virtue that goes to make a good husband and a good father, a good neighbour and a good man, is inclucated by the poet in 19 chapters. 13 more chapters deal with the life of the ascetic and the virtues to be practised by him. The first four chapters of this Part serve as an introduction to the whole work; and the chapter that ends the section on the life of the householder is devoted to Fame as a great motive force to do good, while that which ends the whole Part treats of Destiny or rather the potential force which is behind every man impelling him to action good or evil, and which is the general resultant of all his thoughts and actions in his previous births.

Some of the grandest thoughts that have ever been uttered by man are to be found in this Part. Though it is difficult to select, we may specially mention verses 76, 115, 128, 156, 207, 247, 314, 341, 360, and 363.

What is the grand feature of the first Part is its healthy outlook on life. "The chiefest blessing" declares our author, "is an honourable home, and its crowning glory is worthy offspring." How charming is his love for children! "The touch

of children is the delight of the body." "It is only they who have not listened to the prattle of their little ones that are attracted by the guitar and the flute!" The Poet insists greatly on the love of mankind and the honouring of the guest as among the chief virtues of a man. The man that loveth not is like a dry tree in the wilderness. Kindness of speech is inclucated as a special virtue by itself. Such vices as fornication, envy, coveting, slander, vain speaking, and injuring a neighbour are condemned, and such virtues as uprightness, forgiveness, obligation and good will to all, and charity, are recommended; and the first section ends, as we have remarked before, with a chapter on Glory, for *they alone live who live without blemish: and they alone die who have lived without glory.* It will thus be seen that it is a cheerful, smiling, benignant humanity that Tiruvalluvar wants to create in his country and in the world.

But the life of man ends not with this world. When man has fulfilled his duties towards society by living a life of usefulness and virtue, and by giving birth to children to take his place in the grand and never - ending drama of life, he has to think of another life, the life that is beyond death. The householder has ascended a few rungs on the ladder of life with the help of this righteous conduct, but from his more exalted station he sees a larger righteousness unfold itself before him. He has to go through a life of stricter discipline than before. He has now to practise mercy to all living beings, abjure flesh - meat, mortify his body and concentrate his thoughts, and thus obtain a higher spiritual power and vision, purify his mind by a strict adherence to truth, and conquer his anger and every temptation to injure or kill even the smallest of creatures. Most of the virtues treated of here should also of course be practised by the householder, though many of them only in a lesser degree; but they are placed in this section on account of their more intimate relation to the ascetic. This life of discipline removes the veils of ignorance covering the soul one after another, the eyes of the ascetic are opened, and he sees that the phenomenal life is no better than a dream and a shadow, a thing that is to-day but passes away tomorrow. He therefore renounces his attachments to this world utterly, and then he realises

the Truth. "Heaven is nearer to him than the Earth" now. But there is yet the insidious foe of Desire which, taking a thousand forms and a thousand shapes, tempts men even the most spiritually minded, and until that is killed once for all there is no permanent bliss for the soul. And so the killing of Desire forms appropriately the last chapter of the section on the Life of the Ascetic.

The chapter on Destiny requires some explanation. The word used by the poet is ul and its original meaning is order or regularity. The idea underlying the word is the orderly unrolment of the whole of the accumulated unspent force of a man's actions in all his past lives. The Hindu belief is that all actions good and bad alike have, in addition to their visible physical effect in life, an invisible effect in the unseen world which transforms itself again into visible effects only later on. Using the phraseology of physical science may help a good deal to understand what we mean. Of the total force of every action of a man-including thought and word also in the word action-one part goes off as kinetic energy and that is represented by the visible effects that appear immediately the action is ended. But another part remains unspent for the time being, and, whether it is much or little, it is stored up somewhere in the universe to uncoil itself as time and opportunity offer themselves. The storing up is certainly in part in the character of the man who does the action. But another and sometimes the larger part of it is in Nature and in the memory or consciousness of fellowmen. Now the innumerable actions, conscious and unconscious, of a man's life go on accumulating this potential energy until the very end of his life on earth, of not even beyond. Some of this potential energy is being turned to kinetic every moment of his life, but all the same a large portion remains unspent at the moment of death and accompanies the soul in its transmigration into another body. It is this energy waiting to materialise itself in the new life of the soul that our philosophical writers call by the name of Karma or ul. The idea of the all but omnipotent force of this karma can now be rightly grasped by the reader,

whether he is or is not convinced of the truth of it as a fact. It is powerful because it forms part and parcel of a man's character as the original tendencies with which he is born. And the portion of it that has formed part of Nature and remains in the memory of fellow-men must be even more powerful as it is much more beyond the control of the subject's will than his inward tendencies. We hope these words will be sufficient to make the reader understand the trend of chapter 38 to which the title Destiny is given only for want of a better word to express the above ideas. That the ideas expressed in this chapter are, however, quite compatible with an active and energetic life, the author shows everywhere, and especially in verses 619 and 620 chapters 27 and 63.

The position of this chapter at the end of the Part on Righteousness may be explained thus. The author who is not a lawgiver in the sense that he has the power to compel the observance of his laws, has however to see that his laws are obeyed by those for whom they are intended. He requires a sanction to compel men to pursue the path of righteousness that he has shown with such infinite love to them. And what higher sanction is there than the knowledge that if a man does evil he will carry a load of evil which will make him unhappy and cursed in his next birth, and that if he does good he will have laid by a treasure which will be a blessing to him whenever and wherever he happens to incarnate himself?

PART II - WEALTH

The author takes up the question of Politics in the second Part of the book. The fact that this part is about twice the size of the first and thrice that of the third shows what importance the sage gives to Politics in his scheme of life. The giving of the title of Wealth to this subject is no new invention of Tiruvalluvar. Already Kautilya had written his immortal treatise on politics and called it the Arthashastra of treaties on wealth, But even he is not the inventor of this nomenclature, for it is at least as old as the Mahabharata.

The underlying idea seems to be that wealth cannot be amassed or enjoyed in security except under a stable and well ordered government. For "The condition of the rich man is more galling than that of the poor under the rule of the tyrant prince" (558). Of course the vast majority of the rules that are laid down for the guidance of the prince and the minister apply with no less force to the man who is solely after the acquisition of wealth.

As, in the first part, the poet shows himself as a moral teacher of the very highest order, so, in this part, he appears as a consummate statesman and a thorough man of the world. Not a single function of the statesman in unfamiliar to him. Everywhere he reveals the firm grasp that he has of the fundamental principles that underlie the art of government. There is no confusion, there are no haphazard imaginings, there is no more wordiness in any of his 700 verses on the subject of Wealth. Everything is in its right place and is seen in proper proportion. It is the day light of reason illuminating the whole field of the statesman's art.

We had better remark at once here that every verse in the second Part (excepting the first one hundred verses of section II which apply in the first instance to the Minister) applies to the Prince as the ruler of his State, whether the author specially mentions him or only gives a rule or makes a remark that applies to all mankind. To give an example verse 531 reads, "Worse than excessive rage is the unguardedness that cometh of selfcomplacency." This is a general remark applicable to all men. But in the intention of the poet, this rule is addressed in the first instance by the poet to formulate rules for the proper and efficient conduct of the State. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the verses of this Part apply to ordinary men of affairs as well. There is no question as to the fact that those verses that address themselves to or speak of all men in general do apply to all men whether prince or peasant. But even those counsels which are specially given to princes or ministers are intended also for all men of the world wherever they are applicable, Verse 462 is an example.

Having made these preliminary observation we shall make a few remarks as to the contents of Part II. The author is fully convinced, as all right-thinking statesmen ought to be, of the necessity of preserving order in the State, and has a great abhorrence of anarchy (735), and misgovernment (740 and 551-70). The prince, he says, should not be above the law and should be impartial and just (ch. 55). He should give full liberty of speech to his subjects and to his ministers to criticise him and his rule when he goes wrong (389, 447, 448). The king should not roll in luxury but should be alert and watchful and accessible to all who demand justice, should develop the resources of his kingdom, and protect his subjects from internal and external enemies (Chh, 39, 54, 60, and 62 and verses 549, 550). He should be learned in all the arts of peace and war. He should choose his friends from among the good and the great, and should avoid the company of the low and the vulgar (Chh. 45 and 46). He should examine his own mind constantly and never allow any vice to enter and obtain a foothold there (Ch. 44). He should select his officers with due care (Chh. 51 and 52), and supervise everything personally (520 and 553) as well as by means of secret agents (Ch. 59). He should look after his kindred and treat them worthily. And being almost all-powerful in the State, he should cultivate the quality that should be an automatic check on the extravagant use of his power, the quality, namely, of considerateness towards all (Ch. 58). But above all he should be firm and daring, and should never be weak or irresolute in his purposes.

As to the Minister, he should be a man of affairs, clever and circumspect, pure-minded, devoted to the Prince, and skilful in reading the hearts of men. He should be a courtier in the best sense of the term, knowing when to speak and what to speak, and when to hold his tongue. When representing his master in foreign courts he should be respectful to the prince to whose court he is appointed, and polite and social with the high functionaries of that court; but at the same time and above all, he should have an ever - watchful eye to the interests and honour

of his prince. And lastly he should be well versed in all the arts of the forum (Chh. 64-73).

The members of the body politic are six according to all Indian writers and they are adopted by Tiruvalluvar. The minister is one of them. The other members are, as enumerated in verse 381, the people, resources, allies, the army, and fortresses.[4] In 22 chapters the author gives the most salient features of these five members of the body of the State in their positive as well as negative aspects. The people are treated under the heading *Territory* (Ch. 74). Chapters 91 to 94 are taken by the commentator Parimelalakar, who is responsible for the division (followed here) of the book into sections, as speaking of those who are unfit to be friends or allies to the Prince, and chapter 95 treats of the art of the physician who must be in *loco amici* to the Prince. Independently of this, however, these chapters are also meant, as indeed every other chapter of the first and second parts of the book, to give wholesome rules for regulating the private conduct of prince and peasant alike.

In the section entitled Miscellaneous the poet treats in 13 chapters of various subjects which cannot be included under the first two headings of Part II but which are too important to be omitted form his book. His verses on Honour and Worth are especially remarkable.

PART III - LOVE

After considering the subject of Politics which claims such a large portion of the activities of man, the poet comes to treat of the third of the four great objectives of life, namely Love. The whole part is taken by the great commentators of the Kural as the romance of a single couple from the time when they meet each other for the first time up to the time when they reunite after a temporary separation from one another. But for one or two stanzas which may not appear to fit exactly which this scheme, all the 250 verses do lend themselves to this explanation.[5] Of course each verse can also be considered as describing an isolated situation and containing a delicate analysis of one of the hundred varying moods of the

lover's heart. The most ardent admirers of Locksley Hall will have to admit that the Tamil poet is easily the superior of Tennyson in analysing the infinite number of moods that chase each other in the agitated minds of lovers.

The romance begins with the accidental meeting of a young man and a damsel in a grove. It is a case of love at first sight. They plight their words to one another and enter the married state. No rites are gone through but the simple plighting of the faith, but that was sufficient in the heroic age of Tamil society to legalise the marriage. It corresponds exactly to the Gandharva marriage of the Sanskrit Dharma Shastras. The marriage however is kept secret by the lovers and they are at first inclined to wait for a favourable opportunity to make it public. But neither the husband nor the wife have sufficient patience to wait for that opportunity. They are impatient to rush to each other's arms (1131 and 1138) before the minds of the parents and relations of the girl can be prepared to receive the news of their secret marriage. But lovers in the Tamil land had perfected in the course of ages an ingenious machinery to stead them under a dilemma of this kind. The lover undergoes a sort of martyrdom both physical and moral in order to induce the people of the village and the parents of his lady-love to pity his distraction and offer him of their own accord the object of his passion. A few branches of the palmyra palm are joined together so as to enable a man to sit astride on the bundle, the lover sits on it, and a number of his friends carry him in that posture into the village singing passionate songs of love. The edges of the palmyra branches being rough and hard and indented, the riding of the palmyra stalk or the palmyra horse, as it is called, is a veritable martyrdom. The young folks of the village mock at the lovelorn pilgrim and perhaps refer to the object of his passion by name even (Ch. 115). The outcry reaches the ears of the parents and other relations of the maiden in the village. They reproach her for entering into matrimony without their consent (1147), but there is no remedy now but to give their consent, and everything ends happily for

the lovers. The idea of the palmyra horse may be compared with the following verses of the Twelfth Night, I. v:-

> Make me a willow cabin at your gate,
> And call upon my soul within the house
> With loyal cantons of contemned love,
> And sing them loud even in the dead of night,
> Holla your name to the reverberate hills,
> And make the babbling gossip of the air
> Cry out, Olivia!

Now the pair live a happy married life for some time, but the husband has soon to part for the wars from which, he tells his wife, he would soon return laden with glory and wealth. The wife cannot bear even the thought of separation. She will surely die if he leaves her. "If there is anything about not parting, speak it to me: but if it is only about thy speedy return, tell it to those who will survive till then" (1151). But he persuades her to allow him to part, and goes away. Wars and battles, however, do not hurry on to an end for the sake of young ladies, and the husband does not return within the appointed time. The pangs and pains of the wife's love-sickness are described by the poet in 11 beautiful chapters, all the verses of which are games sparkling with the light of fancy or expressing some of the tenderest emotions of the love-oppressed heart. The husband at last returns. The wife at first sulks because of his overstay, but cannot really withstand the passion of her heart to clasp him to her bosom. *Bouderie*[6] as one of the incidents of married life is described in three beautiful chapters, which are the last of the book; and as you read them you almost see the pouting lips and indignant eyes, and hear the hard words of the wife to the husband. But every pet ends in a petting which is only the more enjoyable for the quarrel that preceded it. For "*bouderie* is the salt of love ."

It is because the subject matter of the second section consists of the actions and feelings of the chaste wife in the absence of her lord that Tamil poets speak of them under the title of Chastity.

The above is a very inadequate description of the treasure which the reader will find spread out before him by the poet his enlightenments as well as enjoyment in the 133 chapters of his book. Whether he speaks of moral duties or state policy, of the principles of action to be followed in order to succeed in life, or the varying emotions in the trembling hearts of lovers, everywhere Tiruvalluvar has sounded the utmost depths of human thought. The prophets of the world have not emphasised the greatness and power of the Moral Law with greater insistence or force; Bishma or Kautilya, Kamandaka or Ram Das, Vishnu Sharman or Machiavelli or Confucius have no more subtle counsel to give on the conduct of the State; poor Richard has no wiser saw for the raising up of clever business men; and Kalidasa or Shakespeare have no deeper knowledge of the lovers' heart and its varied moods; than this pariah weaver of Mylapore! Such is the universality of mind of this grand seer who was born in the Tamil country but who belongs to all mankind.

When one has read his book through, the one impression that abides in the mind is that virtue and honour and manliness triumph over everything, and that vice and degradation are to be eschewed even should they bring pleasure and profit. This is the master-thought that runs through the whole book "even as the thread that is seen through the crystal bead." Certain verses in the Second Part, like 830 for example, may look as if they would take away a little from this high praise. But we must understand that the author makes a clear distinction between private morality and state necessity. In private life, for instance, forgiveness is one of the greatest virtues and chapter 16 sings its praises abundantly. But, for the king as the representative of the State it is only a limited virtue. He must punish the guilty as a matter of course. Not only that. When he has an enemy he is not to sit quiet, allowing him to grow in power and strength, but he must attack and subdue him seriously (879). And when a neighbouring prince defies him, he should humble his pride at once (880). But all the same, the king and the State have not *a carte blanche* to do what they please with regard to their subjects or their neighbours. They should not think of acquiring even kingdoms by means for which they would have to blush (1016).

And "to try to lay by wealth by means of guile is like trying to preserve water in a pot of clay that is not baked" (660).

While admiring the high moral purpose and the sublime ethics of Tiruvalluvar, Christian writers, actuated by what we may call, for want of a better term, a spell of religious use of this very moral elevation of the poet to attack the religions of India in an insidious manner. Dr. Pope repeats in substance what Beschi, Digot, and others have written, and speaks of the Kural as "the one oriental book, much of whose teaching is an echo of the Sermon on the Mount," and says of the author, "Without doubt Christian influence most affected him........ we see in Tiruvalluvar a noble, truth - loving and devout man, *feeling in the darkness after God, if haply he might find him.*" And in another place, with a patronising air towards the great sage and his people he remarks, "I suppose he was not satisfied with the glimpses he had obtained of man's future, and awaited for light; or, perhaps he thought his people not prepared for higher teaching." The reverend gentleman insinuates in these and similar remarks that Tiruvalluvar's book could not have been so moral in its tone but for his having listened to the doctrines of Christ from the descendants of those who must have, according to a scarcely credible theory, received the teachings of the Apostle St. Thomas at Mylapore.

Writing as Tiruvalluvar does on almost all things that concern man's life here as well as hereafter, it is easy to find parallels to his maxims among the greater writers of almost every nation in the world. But that is no reason for at once jumping to the conclusion that he must have listened to the words of any sage in particular. Whatever be the truth as to St. Thomas having preached at Mylapore, the author of the Kural does not show that he has ever heard of any of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. Many Christians have a tendency to think that the ideas of forgiving one's enemies, abstaining from returning evil for evil, humility etc. have been first taught to the world only

by Jesus Christ. To say that these ideas are not autochthonous to any great nation that has developed a distinct civilisation of its own, one must possess a much greater amount of learning than falls to the lot of the ordinary man. But it can be safely asserted that these ideas were the common property of great minds at least four centuries before Jesus was born. And Tiruvalluvar had enough in the sacred literature of India, to say nothing of his own Illumined Self, to enable him to build these truths in his grand scheme of life without being indebted in any way to the teachings of Jesus, though he would certainly have studied with love and humility the teachings of that great Rishi had he known of his existence.

So again Hindus, Buddhists and Jains and Shaivas are each fond of asserting that the sage belonged to their own particular persuasion. But if every one of these religions can claim many of his teachings as its own, none of them can deny that they also belong to its rivals. And each of them will find it difficult to reconcile some of his ideas with its orthodox doctrines. For instance, almost all the names by which Tiruvalluvar refers to the Lord in his first chapter apply distinctively to the Buddha and to the Arhat of the Jains. But the southern Jains have to find an explanation for his reference to a creator of the universe (1062), for the high regard that he has for the sacred character of the Brahmans, their Gods, their sacrifices, and their Vedas (543, 560, 413, 134), for his Hindu division of life into four states (41), and for his attributing of anger to ascetics (29). The Buddhists have to explain his reference to the five principles of matter (271) while they admit only four his approval of self-mortification and austerities (Ch. 27), and his condemnation of the eating of meat (Ch. 26). On the other hand, neither Shiva nor Vishnu nor any other God of the Hindu pantheon is by name spoken of as the supreme God anywhere in the book. The truth therefore appears to be that in whatever persuasion Tiruvalluvar had been born, he freed himself from the trammels of all sects and worked his way up to the Illuminated Existence of the *Yogin* for whom

there are no persuasions or sects or religions, but only Truth and Wisdom and Joy.

THE VERSE

A few words on the verse of the Kural will not be deemed out of place here though this book is mainly intended for readers who are unacquainted with Tamil. The title of the book itself indicates to the Tamil reader the verse in which it is written. For the word Kural means only a short rhymed couplet, the first line of which is composed of four feet and the second of three feet. The last foot of the first line or the first food of the second line rhyme as a rule with the first foot of the first line. The ability with which the poet manages the caesura in these short verses is something masterly. It is within the compass of these seven feet that our author has compressed some of the profoundest thoughts that have ever been uttered by man. And how like a master he plays on this tiny instrument! Sparkling wit and humour, the pointed statement, fancy, irony, the naive question, the picturesque simile, there is not one of these and other of the thousand tricks of the born artist that our author has not employed in this perfect masterpiece of art. But the abiding note in this varied symphony is the sublime. Well has an admirer described the Kural as "a little mustard seed, but whose bore holds all the waters of the seven oceans." If we should start quoting we should have to quote each one of the 1330 verses that compose the book, and so we shall merely refer the reader to verses 263, 397, 827, 835, 839, 922, 1071, 1072, 1073, 1219, and 1220 as some of the finest that he can ever meet with in any work in the world.

The following transliteration of a typical verse is intended to satisfy the curiosity of those readers who are unacquainted with Tamil:

Kamam vekuli mayakkam ivaimundrin
Namam kedakkedum noy.-verse 360.

PARIMELALAKAR

No man that writes or speaks about the Kural can forget to refer to its greatest commentator Parimelalakar. Parimelalakar was a Brahman scholar who lived and taught at Kanchi about 600 years ago. Nine commentators had interpreted the kural before him. But it was reserved for him alone to enter in to the very mind of the author, as it were, and bring out every beauty and thought that lie imbedded in the original. But for his commentary none in modern days could understand the full significance of the original verses. His commentary is as terse and vigorous as the kural itself in point of style. The reasonings by which he condemns readings and renderings other than his own are a study in sharp, incisive, logical, and dignified criticism. I an tempted to give an example of his method of commenting. I take verse 687 which would stand thus in literal translation: Knowing his duty, considering the time, judging the place, (and) deliberating, (who) speaks (is) head.

Here is the commentary:

Knowing his duty: understanding how to comport himself before foreign princes;

Considering the time: judging the moods of those princes;

Judging the place: judging the proper place to address to them the business for which he has gone;

Deliberating: meditating within himself beforehand as to how he should deliver his message;

(Who) speaks (is) head: who delivers the same in that manner is the fittest among ambassadors.

The manner of comporting himself before princes consists in weighing the political situation of their kingdom as well as that of his own king, weighing his own status as ambassador, and regulating thereon the formalities to be observed in visiting and speaking to the prince etc. Mood is the state of mind that is

prepared to receive in good part what he (the envoy) is going to say. As it depends on time the author speaks of it under the heading of time. The place referred to is the place where there are men who are friendly to the ambassador. Deliberation consists in imagining the words that he is going to use, the possible replies of the other side, his own rejoinders etc., in all their possible developments. As the northern writers (Sanskrit authors (add the carriers of written messages to the other two classes of ambassadors[7] and classify envoys into three classes, namely, first (lit. head), second (lit. the middle), and third (lit. lowest or last), our author uses the word head so as to apply to their classification also, The word ambassador is supplied by the title of the chapter. Theses five verses (683 to 687) describe the qualifications of the ambassador who is allowed full freedom of negotiation."

I shall give but one example of the commentator's criticism. In verse 338 which reads, *The fledgeling abandoneth the broken shell of the egg and flieth away: that is the symbol of the love between the soul and the body,* the word kudambai which Parimelalakar explains as the shell of the egg had been explained by others from the etymological point of view. It is in these words that our scholiast supports his own rendering as against the other:

"As the author says abandoneth (more literally abandoneth to itself) We obtain the unseparatedness of the shell in the previous stage: that is, its contemporaneous origin with the embryo and its remaining as the matrix and support of the same until the very moment of separation. Hence it is the symbol of the body. As the bird is one with the shell in the beginning and as it enters not thereinto after the breaking thereof, the same is the symbol of the soul. Though there are other beings that are oviparious, it is the bird that is taken as the symbol of the soul here as it alone flies away from the shell. The word love is denotative of want of love. As the conscious, immaterial soul and the dull, material body are the very opposites of each other,

know that there can be no attachment between them but what comes of karma.

"Now there are those who would explain kudambai as nest. But as its origin is not contemporaneous with that of the bird, and as the bird goes again into to after leaving it, the reader will see that it cannot symbolise the body."

After these two examples it is quite superfluous to expatiate any more to the reader on the great qualities of the commentator. The Tamil people have preserved this commentary with the most religious care. Indeed it as well as the kural have been among the greatest sources of inspiration to the princes of the Tamil country for good and just rule and for successful statecraft. Even thirty years ago the Zemindars of the Tamil land were great lovers of the Kural and their children were carefully initiated into the rules of state policy and good government that abound in it and in Parimelalaker. Would that these great books were again restored to their proper place in the curricula of study of our young men both rich and poor!

In undertaking this translation, my object has been not only to spread a knowledge of Tiruvalluvar's grand work as widely as possible in the world, but also to induce my own countrymen speaking other languages than Tamil to retranslate it into their different vernaculars, so that the words of a great moral teacher who intended his message for all the world and for all time, may not fail at least now to reach the ears of the poorest of the poor and the simplest of the simple of his own countrymen, and to sow in their hearts the seeds of noble, dignified, virtuous, and manly life. If I shall be able to say to myself that I have contributed something towards spreading the ideas of the Great Master among a wider audience among my countrymen, I shall consider that I have been amply rewarded for my labours.[8]

NOTES

1. According to the most widely-believed tradition.
2. The figures within brackets in this para, refer to chapters. Everywhere else in the preface they will refer to the number of the verse except where chapters are indicated by the letters Ch.
3. Kali Abda, i.e. the kali Era which commenced 3101 or 3102 years before the first year A.D.
4. An old commentator divides the second part into sections different to those into which Parimelalakar divides it. Here is his division:- (i) 39-63: the Prince; (ii) 64-73: the minister: (ii) 74-78: substance; (iv) 79-83: alliances: (v) 84-93: things that lead to unhappiness; and (vi) 94-108: the nature of the citizen
5. One commentator divides the 25 chapters of Part III into 5 sections of 5 chapters each thus:- 109-113: Kurinji, i.e., Meeting and its causes; 114-118: Palai,i.e., Separation and its Causes; 119:123: Mullai, i.e., Loneliness and its causes; 124-128: Neidal, i.e., Complaints and their causes: and 129-133: Marudam, i.e., Sulks and their causes.
6. Sulks.
7. Explained in the comentator's note to the title of the chapter as he who speaks only what he is told to speak, and he who is allowed a wide discretion as to what he is told to speak being used in the sense of negotiating.
8. The above preface is, but for some slight alterations, substantially the same that appeared in the first edition in 1916. Since then I understand that Pandit Kshemanand Rohat has rendered this English translation into Hindi, and that Shrimans Gopal Rao of Ellore and Garimalla Satyanarayana have translated some portions of the same into Telugu. All three works, I understand, are still in manuscript. The addresses of these gentlemen are unknown to me.

The Kural
(or)
The Maxims of Thiruvallvar
First Edition, 1916, pp. xiii - xlvii

5

THIRUVALLUVAR

Dr. S. SOMASUNDARA BHARATIAR

INTRODUCTION

Rank credulity about antiquities and blighting scepticism in actualities appear to be two of the quite the common chancteristics of the psychology of the average moden Tamil minds. While mistrust of men and things of the work-a-day world greatly handicap us in our real live and daily common intercourse and activities, our confiding credulity accepts readily and without the least scrutiny all sorts of stories told us about our ancients and their lives. This passing phase of the easy mental pose of modern Tamilaham need not be noticed seriously but for its responsibility for making much worthless history in the present renaissance. Almost all our beliefs derived or dating from the dark days of the medieval Tamilaham are now in the melting pot:and it is only right that they should be tested in the crucibles of critical scrutiny even if it were only to rediscover/ or revise and rightly appraise their real values. Close scruitny without bias and with earnestness will really be of double service and can do no harm. It will serve truths to triumph; only fictions and fables may fade and wither away under its ruthless but all-purifying radiorays. There is thus no reason to blame or ban any attempts of earnest enquiry and honest research/ even were they to lead us to doubt, discount or denounce some of our

fond beliefts of fair standing and wide currency. Let us theretore turn now to critically re-examine the common tales about the great poet-philospher of yore, whose classic Kural has come to arrest the attention, receive the recognition, and win the admiration of most of the cultured mankind, regardless of all regional, racial or religious barriers and limitations.

2. The most common story that is now in current circulation makes Valluvar the last born of a brood of semi-divine babes who were the illegitimate issue of an unblest (if not also perhaps an illicit) intercourse between a Bedouin Brahman of doubtful parentage and his Pulaya enamorata. The baby was cruelly forsaken, as were all his fellows before him, on the luckless day of his nativity by both his heartless unnatural parents; and the lovelorn foundling was brought up in a panchama or a non-caste non-Aryan home. Our orthodox story-tellers then draw a pretty thick veil over the whole of his boyhood and early manhood, and bring him again all of a sudden on the stage in his mature mellowed manhood quite as a marvel of a maser-poet and profound philosopher in one, only to shoot cometlike before the Royal Academy (known as the III sangam) in the great Pandian capital to dazzale and disgrace its proud and privileged members for a while, and then to vanish equally cometlike from all further gaze of vulgar humanity. The savants of the far-famed Sangam, in the flush of pride and plenitude of power born of royal favour and state protection, slighted the immortal Kural and refused to recognize any merits of its divine author when he produced it as per convention then in vogue for their iprimateur. By this contumacious conduct to Valluvar, said to be an Avatar or incarnation of Brahma Himself as a rarely unique Pulaya-Braman cross-breed celebrity on earth, the royal Academicians incurred the divine wrath not only of this godling, but also for Saraswathi (his earthly sister and erstwhile heavenly spouse) and also for Vishnu (Brahma's own celestical father but now born as the natural brother of Brahma in his Pulaya incarnation. We cannot fail here to notice the quaint humour of

the makers of all this mythical pabulam in giving our poet-philosopher in his expedition in quest of literary victories the company and comradeship of his eternal spouse Saraswathi and his divine parent Vishnu-who were now readily requisitioned to be his co-born sister 'Avvai' and brother Idaikadar in utter oblivion of their celestial relationahip, only in order to join forces with him as allies and auxiliaries to dethrone the few mortal members of the Madura Academy from their priviliged position of prestige and pride. When ultimately the slighted book of the despised divine bard was placed, as was the wont on occasions of such literary contests, on the sacred plank in the temple tank on which also the Sangam members squatted for trial of its literary merits, the plank, we are demurely told, suddenly shrank up just to accommodate the peerless book launching out all the arrogant academicians in the tank water to sink or swim as best they might. In their humbled and abject plight and to escape further perils from the disastrous displeasure of the divine trios, all the 49 erstwhile imperious Sangam savants broke out into eulogistic metrical adulations of the holy Kural and its immortal author. Their verses, together with some other songs attributed to the divine muse (our poet's spouse-sister) to Deus Siva, to the bodiless sky spirit and to others, make up the panegyrics now known as 'Thiruvalluva Malai' or 'Valluvar's Garland of Poetry', To save themselves from a watery grave, all the proud poets are said to have offered the incense of fulsome flattery by these panegyrics to soften the incensed divinity, who was till then only a contemptible Pulaya mendicant before them. The godly Pulaya, after making the Sangam savants eat the humble pie, relented only to spare his penitent petitioners their lives, yet ruthlessly slaughtered and buried their glorious corporate career in the great Sangam in the dust of irredeemable oblivion. Later legends also wed him to a Vysia or Vellala wife-called Vasuki, engages him in the soft time-hallowed vocation of the warp and whoof, domiciles him at Mylapore on the Madras beach, and gives him also an easy but unedifying patronage of a

generous merchant- millionaire and ship-owner called Elalasingan who received in return for his meagre mercenary help many a mirculous blessing from his grateful godly protege, who all the world now honour only as the author of the deathless ekthical distiches.

3. The kernal of all this mythical yarn is to endow the peerless poet with an enenviable Pulaya- birth with a streak of possible Braman blood in his melacha veins, accompanied and unrelieved by an unedifying low breeding: and his fabled debut in the great Pandian metropolis is said to have been divinely pre-ordained to end the pride and destroy the prestige and position of the famous Tamil Sangam, which our poet philosopher with divine intervention deliberately and inexorably humbled to the dust. for ever. This vulgar tale asserts that the poet's very first advent in Madura brought him a blazing fame as deservedly, as it proved the ignoble exit of the far-famed Tamil Academy into the eternal fog of unmerited oblivion.

All these elaborate uncanny tales appear, like most other favoured fables, to lack the background of any proved to proveable facts. The whole fabric of these baseless fictions seems to crumble at the lightest touch of critical scrutiny. In the first place they receive no countenance whatever from any authentic work of our ancient men of letters, or other accredited evidence of yore. So hoary a past was our Sage's time, and so great was the fame of his ethical poem that his human personality was overshadowed by and swallowed up in the impersonal greatness of the poet, so much so that even by the Sanga-Sagas he ceased to be remembered by his personal name and was revered only as the seer of eternal verities and author of his deathless distiches.

2

THE AGE OF VALLUVAR

4. Our sage obviously belongs to the far off prehisotric pre Nakkirar times; and his mighty personality alone persists from

the dimmest distant past through all the ages and times of Tamil traditions and history solely by dint of the sheer merit of the peerless pearl, known to us as the 'Kural' or the 'short-metre' the deathless work of its author's master-mind. Far from slighting him or scoffing at his work and being scotched by him in revenge as the fables give out, we have unmistakable evidence in the worthy works of our classic poets to prove that the Sangam scholars held his Kural in such great veneration as to freely and frequently quote from it, and that they also revered him as a divine preceptor. However, they either forgot or ignored the common facts and ordinary events of our hero's human life. At any rate they did not record or refer to any details bearing on Valluvar's biography in any of their great works that have come down to us. Either they found them unavailable even in their times, or thought them uncalled for and superfluous to be remembered and handed down to posterity in connection with a sage and superman, whose immortal master-piece was a monument engough to preserve his fame in perpetuity. We are told that the dawn of Valluvar's fame proved the dolesome night of death for that of the great Sangam; and the deathless Kural in its very birth-travails gave an inglorius burial to the last Royal Academy of the Pandian kings for despising its divine author. Yet in truth we find there are several reverent references to and excerpts from Kural adorning many a classic of the Sangam celebrities, which cannot be if these tales were true, and which afford in themselves ample proof as much of the immense antiquity as of the unchallenged greratness of Valluvar. His classic work should have not only defied and disarmed, but also surmounted and survived all contemporary envy; and its unrivalled and towering merits should have easily earned and established for itself long prior to the Sangam songs a niche in the fane of fame sufficiently sacred to warrant and elicit so many a warm and voluntary tribute from those proud and privileged poets of the Royal Academy. Let us just call out and pass in review only a few of these unimpeachable credentials of our

master poet's antiquity, which we find enshrined and embalmed in the available Sangam classics

1. இடுக்கண்கால் கொன்றிட வீழு மடுத்தூன்றும்
நல்லா ளிலாத குடி (1030)

தூங்குசிறை வாவலுறை தொன்மரங்க ளென்ன
ஓங்குகுல நையவத னுட்பிறந்த வீரர்
தாங்கல்கட னாகுந்தலை சாய்க்கவரு தீச்சொல்
நீங்கல்மட வார்கடனென் றெழுந்து போந்தான்.

(சிந்தா-காந்தருவ-6)

2. வேட்ட பொழுதி னவையவை போலுமே
தோட்டார் கதுப்பினா டோள்.1105

வேட்டார்க்கு வேட்டனவே போன்றினிய வேய்மென்றோட்
பூட்டார் சிலைநுதலாட் புல்லா தொழியேனே.
(சிந்தா-குண. 192)

3. கடலன்ன காம முழந்து மடலேறாப்
பெண்ணிற் பெருந்தக்க தில். (1137)

எண்ணில் காம மெரிப்பினு மேற்செலாப்
பெண்ணின் மிக்கது பெண்ணல தில்லையே.
(சிந்தா-குண. 148)

4. கூற்றத்தைக் கையால் விளித்தற்றா லாற்றுவார்க்
காற்றாதா ரின்னா செயல். (894)

யாண்டுச்சென் றியாண்டு முளராகார் வேந்துப்பின்
வேந்து செறப்பட் டவர் (895)

வேந்தொடு மாறுகோடல் விளிகுற்றார் தொழிலதாகும்.

(சிந்தா - குண. 239)

5. சிறப்பீனும் செல்வமு மீனு மறத்தினூஉங்
காக்க மெவனோ உயிர்க்கு. (31)

அறத்தான் வருவதே யின்பமற் றெல்லாம்
புறத்த புகழு மில. (39)

சிறப்புடை மரபின் பொருளும் இன்பமும்
அறத்து வழிப்படூஉம் தோற்றம் போல. (புறம்31)

6. *நாடாது நட்டலிற் கேடில்லை நட்டபின்*
வீடில்லை நட்பாள் பவர்க்கு. (791)
நாடி நட்பி னல்லது
நட்டு நாடார்தம் மொட்டியோர் திறத்தே.
(நற்றிணை - 32)

7. ஒருநா ளெழுநாள்போற் செல்லுஞ்சேட் சென்றார்
வருநாள்வைத் தேங்கு பவர்க்கு. *(1269)*

பெறினென்னாம் பெற்றக்கா லென்னா முறினென்னாம்
உள்ள முடைந்துக்கல் கால். *(1270)*

ஊடற்கட் சென்றேன்மற் றோழி யதுமறந்து
கூடற்கட் சென்றதென் னெஞ்சு. *(1284)*

....

....

புலப்பேன்யான் என்பேன்மன் அந்நிலையே அவற்காணிற்
கலப்பேன் என்னுமிக் கையறு நெஞ்சே.

ஊடுவேன் என்பேன்மன் அந்நிலையே அவற்காணிற்
கூடுவேன் என்னுமிக் கொள்கையி னெஞ்சே

....

....

துனிப்பேன்யான் என்பேன்மன் அந்நிலையே அவற்காணில்
தனித்தோ தாழும் இத்தனி நெஞ்சே.
எனவாங்கு

பிறைபுரை யேர்நுதால் தாமெண்ணி யவையெல்லாம்
துறைபோத லொல்லுமோ தூவாகா தாங்கே
அறைபோகு நெஞ்சுடை யார்க்கு. *(கலி -67)*

8. துஞ்சுங்காற் றோண்மேல ராகி விழிக்குங்கால்
நெஞ்சத்த ராவர் விரைந்து. (1218)

ஓஓ கடலே,
தெற்றெனக் கண்ணுள்ளே தோன்ற இமையெடுத்துப்
பற்றுவென் என்றியான் விழிக்குங்கால் மற்றுமென்
நெஞ்சத்துள் ளோடி யொளித்தாங்கே துஞ்சாநோய்
செய்யு மறனி லவன். (கலி - 144)

9. காமமும் நாணு முயிர்காவாத் தூங்குமென்
நோனா உடம்பி னகத்து. (1163)

10. காம முழந்து வருந்தினார்க் கேம
மடலல்ல தில்லை வலி. (1131)

நலிதருங் காமமுங் கௌவையு மென்றிவ்
வலிதின் உயிர்காவாத் தூங்கியாங் கென்னை
நலியும் விழுமம் இரண்டு. (கலி142)

காமக் கடுப்பகையிற் றோன்றினேற் கேம
மெழினுத தீத்தவிம் மா. (கலி - 139)

11. அறிவினா னாகுவ துண்டோ பிறிதினோய்
தந்நோய்போற் போற்றாக் கடை. (15)

சான்றவர் வாழியோ, சான்றவிர் என்னும்
பிறர்நோயும் தந்நோய்போற் போற்றி அறனறிதல்
சான்றவர்க் கெல்லாம் கடனா லிவ்விருந்த
சான்றீர் உமக்கொன் றறிவுறுப்பென். (கலி - 139)

12. குடிபுறங் காத்தோம்பிக் குற்றங் கடிதல்
வடுவன்று வேந்தன் றொழில். (549)

குடிபுறங் காத்தோம்புஞ் செங்கோலான் வியன்றானை
விடுவழி விடுவழிச் சென்றாங்கு அவர்
தொடுவழித் தொடுவழி நீங்கின்றாற் பசப்பே.
(கலி - 130)

13. ஆக்கங் கருதி முதலிழக்குஞ் செய்வினை
ஊக்கா ரறிவுடை யார். (463)

வாணிக மொன்றுந் தேற்றாய் முதலொடுங் கேடு வந்தால்
ஊணிகந் தூட்டப் பட்ட வூதிய வொழுக்கி னெஞ்சத்

தேணிகந் திலேசு நோக்கி இருமுதல் கெடாமை
கொள்வார்
சேணிகந் துய்யப் போநின் செறிதொடி யொழிய
வென்றார். (சிந்தா - காந்தரு. 278.)

14. *தன்னெஞ் சறிவது பொய்யற்க பொய்த்தபின்*
தன்னெஞ்சே தன்னைச் சுடும். (293)

நெஞ்சறிந்த கொடியவை மறைப்பினும் மறையாவா
நெஞ்சத்திற் குறுகிய கரியில்லை யாகலின்.
(கலி நெய்தல் - 8)

15. *உலகந் தழீஇய தொட்ப மலர்தலும்*
கூம்பலு மில்ல தறிவு. (425)

கோட்டுப்பூப் போல மலர்ந்துபிற் கூம்பாது
வேட்டதே வேட்டதா நட்பாட்சி - தோட்ட
கயப்பூபோன் முன்மலர்ந்து பிற்கூம்பு வாரை
நயப்பாரு நட்பாரு மில். (நாலடி - நட்பாராய்தல் - 5)

16. *இல்லாளை யஞ்சுவா னஞ்சுமற் றெஞ்ஞான்று*
நல்லார்க்கு நல்ல செயல். (905)

இல்லாளை யஞ்சி விருந்தின்முகங் கொன்றநெஞ்சிற்
புல்லாளனாக.
(சிந்தா - மண்மகளிலம்பகம், செய் - 217).

17. *பெயக்கண்டு நஞ்சுண் டமைவர் நயத்தக்க*
நாகரிகம் வேண்டு பவர். (580)

முந்தை யிருந்து நட்டோர் கொடுப்பின்
நஞ்சு முண்பர் நனிநா கரிகர். (நற்றிணை, 355)

18. *களித்தறியே னென்பது கைவிடுக நெஞ்சத்*
தொளித்தூஉ மாங்கே மிகும். (928)

.... காமம்
மறையிறந்து மன்று படும். (1138)

தோழிநாங்,
காணாமை யுண்ட கருங்கள்ளை மெய்கூர
நாணாது சென்று வுரைத்தாங்குக்

கரந்ததூஉங் கையொடு கோட்பட்டாங்
கண்டாய். (கலி. முல்லை - செய். 15)

19. பொதுநோக்கான் வேந்தன் வரிசையா நோக்கின்
அதுநோக்கி வாழ்வார் பலர். (528)

வரிசை யறிதலோ வரிதே பெரிதும்
ஈத லெளிதே மாவண் டோன்றல்
அதுநற் கறிந்தனை யாயிற்
பொதுநோக் கொழிமதி புலவர் மாட்டே. (புறம் - 12)

20. பற்றற்ற கண்ணே பிறப்பறுக்கு மற்று
நிலையாமை காணப் படும். (349)

அற்றது பற்றெனி லுற்றது வீடு. (திருவாய்மொழி 1,2,5)

21. ஆரா வியற்கை யவாநீப்பி னந்நிலையே
பேரா வியற்கை ஷதரும். (370)

சென்றாங் கின்பத் துன்பங்கள் செற்றுக் களைந்து
பசையற்றால்
அன்றே அப்போதே வீடதுவே வீடு வீடாமே.
(திருவாய்மொழி, பதிகம் - 78 பாசுரம் 6)

22. அங்கணத்து ளுக்க வமிழ்தற்றால் (720).

ஊற்றைக் குழியி லமுதம் பாய்வதுபோல். (720)
(பெரியாழ்வார் திருமொழி)

23. நீரின் றைமையா துலகெனின் யார்யார்க்கும்
வானின் றமையா தொழுக்கு. (20)

நீரின் றமையா உலகம் போலத்
தம்மின் றமையா நந்நயந் தருளி (நற்றிணை - 1)

24. நட்டார்க்கு நல்ல செயலின் விரைந்ததே
ஒட்டாரை ஒட்டிக் கொளல். (279)

நட்டார்க்கு நல்ல செயலினிது எத்துணையும்
ஒட்டாரை யொட்டிக் கொளலதனின்
முன்னினிதே. (இனியவை நாற்பது - 18)

25. *சார்புணர்ந்து சார்பு கெடஒழுகின் மற்றழித்துச்*
சார்தரா சார்தரு நோய். *(359)*

சார்புணர்ந்து சார்பு கெடஒழுகின் என்றமையால்
சார்புணர்வு தானே தியானமுமாம் - சார்பு
கெடஒழுகி னல்ல சமாதியுமாங் கேதப்
படவருவ தில்லைவினைப் பற்று.
(திருக்களிற்றுப்படியார்)

26. *வேண்டுங்கால் வேண்டும் பிறவாமை மற்றது*
வேண்டாமை வேண்ட வரும். *(362)*

வேண்டுங்கால் வேண்டும் பிறவாமை என்றமையால்
வேண்டு மஃதே யஃதொன்றும் - வேண்டினது
வேண்டாமை வேண்டவரும் என்றமையால்
வேண்டிடுக
வேண்டாமை வேண்டுமவன் பால்.
(திருக்களிற்றுப்படியார்)

27. *தலைப்பட்டார் தீரத் துறந்தார் மயங்கி*
வலைப்பட்டார் மற்றை யவர். *(348)*

தலைப்பட்டார் தீரத் துறந்தார் மயங்கி
வலைப்பட்டார் மற்றையவ ரென்று - நிலைத்தமிழின்
தெய்வப் புலமைத் திருவள்ளுவ ருரைத்த
மெய்வைத்த சொல்லை விரும்பாமல்.
(நெஞ்சுவிடு தூது)

28. *பிறர்க்கின்னா முற்பகல் செய்யிற் றமக்கின்னா*
பிற்பகற் றாமே வரும். *(319)*

முற்பகற் செய்தான் பிறன்கேடு தன்கேடு
பிற்பகற் காண்குறூஉம் பெற்றியகாண்.
(சிலம்பு: வஞ்சினமாலை, வரி 3, 4)

29. *தெய்வம் தொழாஅள் கொழுநற்*
றொழுதெழுவாள்
பெய்யெனப் பெய்யும் மழை. *(55)*

தெய்வம் தொழாஅள் கொழுநற் றொழுதெழுவாள்
பெய்யெனப் பெய்யும் பெருமழை யென்றவப்
பொய்யில் புலவன் பொருளுரை தேராய்.

(மணிமேகலை : காதை 22 வரி 59-61)

தெய்வம் தொழாஅள் கொழுநற் றொழுவாளைத்
தெய்வம் தொழுதகைமை திண்ணமால் - தெய்வமாய்
மண்ணக மாதர்க் கணியாய கண்ணகி
விண்ணக மாதர்க்கு விருந்து

(சிலம்பு - கட்டுரை காதை)

30. எந்நன்றி கொன்றார்க்கும் உய்வுண்டா
முய்வில்லை
செய்ந்நன்றி கொன்ற மகற்கு. (110)

நிலம்புடை பெயர்வ தாயினு மொருவன்
செய்தி கொன்றார்க் குய்தி யில்லென
அறம்பா டிற்றே யாயிழை கணவ. (புறம் - 34)

5. Such parallels to Kurals from almost all the extant Sangam and post - Sangam works of yore can be multiplied hundred-fold. But those given will quite suffice to show the fact that Valluvar's deathless couplets of eternal truisms have to no small extent fertilized the poetic thought of the classic times of Tamilaham. It may yet be possible for the diehards to argue that the author of Kural may have himself laid under contribution for his book all the earlier poems, after drinking deep and largely from those poetic founts, and that the numerous parallel available could equally prove that far from being the source, his Kural is only a happy hive of sweet honey garnered with care and labour from many a flower of the classic poems. A critical comparison of the concepts as well as the diction of Valluvar's distiches with the available parallels in the Sangam - works will be conclusive proof-positive against any such false surmises and futile suggestions.

The uniformly superb luminous crystals of the Kural themselves afford the best and most convincing evidence of the great age and sterling originality, which have made them genuine diamonds for all times as aginst the fine later imitations of consummate artists thatabound and adorn the other works. Moreover the scrupulous and transparent honesty of the these master-artists even dispenses with the need for exercising this rare faculty of delicate literary criticism, and sets at rest all questions as to the relative priority between the Kural and other available Sangam-works by their frankly pointing to Valluvar's Kural as the beacon-light of the Pole-Star illuminating their spheres of thought. Sathanar and Ilango, in the lines of their great classics cited above, epressly quote from the Kural, and the former in the fervour of his worship reverently refers to Kural as the store-house of eternal verities of a divine poet that never utters but truth. Alathur kizhar in the above Purappattu goes even further and, citing one of Valluvar's immortal couplets, would proclaim it to be a divine revelation of the Deity of Dharma or the eternal-law personified.

6. Now it is accepted on all hands that all the so called Sangam classics are not the works of the poets who all lived almost at the close of the 3rd Sangam age. There are poems in Purananru and works like Kalithokai which are believed to be works of master poets that must have lived not necessarily in the middle nor even the beginning of the 3rd Sangam. Research and critical scrutiny of scholars point to an age for their authors far anterior to the third, and possibly synchronising with the second Sangam. At all events some of these old works are fairly considered to be prior to the 3rd Sangam period. And as our Kural is reverently quoted from even in such very old classics, it is not unreasonable to deduce that Valluvar cannot have lived during the third Sangam age, much less on the eve of its final

dissolution to dig its grave or sing its requiem with his immortal Kural. On the other hand, the inference is irresistible that Kural not only must have had its birth, but must also have established and enjoyed its empire long anterior to these old master to have earned at their hands. the envied and enviable recognition and ungrudging homage so as to be freely and frequently cited from in their great classics.

7. There is yet another proof of Kural's great old age. It is the accepted creed among all the Tamil scholars that Tholkappiam was the accredited standard grammar not only for the third, but even for the second Sangam literature. One of its sutrams expressly tabooes the letter 'ச' at the beginning of Tamil words. The ban appears to have been tacitly lifted even before the post-Sangam age openly revolted against this express rule of grammar, whose authority was throughout the whole of the second and part of the third Sangams was unchallenged and unchallengeable. In many of the later Sangam works we find numerous Tamil workds beginning with this offending letter ச, prescribed by Tholkappiar. It must have served a long course of probation and prenticeship on the sly before finding favour enough and to be openly admitted to the privilege of the pharisees of the Tamil alphabet to begin the Tamil words. The fact that almost all the available Sangam classics now reveal the solemn breach of this rule proves its abrogation by the 3rd Sangam poets. Any closer allegiance to its authority must therefore suggest an age sufficicently prior to the subversion of its sway in the realm of letters; and we find just such an allegiance to it in kural. As far as I gather, you don't come across any Tamil words in Kural in defiance of this law of Tholkappiam. The only two apparent rebels are சலம் and சலன் , who, on close scrutiny, appear to be only alien so-journers serving or sheltering under sufferance,

and not to be native Tamil words claiming any birth-right of citizenship in the realm. This rare loyalty and obedience to the obsolete rules of Tholkappiam again establish that, like Kalithokai, Kural must be a pre-Sangam work to have earned the veneration of the poets of the third Sangam age.

8. There remains perhpas one other argument adduced by some scholars to suggest a later age for Kural, which requires to be examined in this connection. They take their stand on a word or two in a passage in Parimelazhakar's commentary: The words relied on read as follows:- "வியாழ வெள்ளிகளது துணிபுதொகுத்துப்பின் நீதி நூலுடையார் கூறியவாறு கூறுகின்றமையின்" The critics pick up the words, "பின் நீதி நூலுடையார்" assume they refer to Chanakya and other later Sanskrit writers, and argue that Valluvar must have lived long after such later Sanskrit text-writers to have borrowed their maxims. Their arguments rest solely on the quick-sands of surmises, and will crumble at the slightest tread of critical examination. In the first place, there is nothing in the context to warrant a conclusion that the words refer to Chanakya and writers of his age or type. Secondly, Parimelazhakar nowhere countenances a theory that Kural is a mere collection of excerpts and maxims derived even from the pre- Chanakya Dharma-Sastras, like Manu, which admittedly are the sources Chanakya and men of his ilk draw from. On the other hand what the commentator does in these and many similar passages is only to draw attention by comparing and contrasting parallels to points of similarity or otherwise in the two great cultures of the Aryans and the Tamils as regards their institutions and outlook in the several provinces of ethics, politics or erotics. He indicates no intention whatsoever to suggest any indebtedness of Valluvar to any prior Sanskrit original sources for inspiration or ideas. The

panegyrics, known as (வள்ளுவ மாலை) Valluvamalai, expressly state that, if anything, Kural may be compared to the Aryan Vedas, and its place and position in the Tamils language is the same which Vedas occupy in Sanskrit. "ஆரியம் வேதமுடைத்து, தமிழ் திருவள்ளுவனார் ஓதுகுறட்பாவுடைத்து" These Valluvamalai verses even indicate that no post-Vedic Dharma Sastras have anything to do with the Tamil Kural. Lastly, it must be remembered here that Neethi Sastras are only treatises on positive law; whereas Kural treats of the whole realm of ethics covering the entire range of both the social, political and domestic politics. Such a comprehensive synthetic system of ethics need not and cannot be based on exclusively legal or politico-legal sectional text-books like those of Chanakya. Parimêlazhakar frequently points out and emphasises the peculiarly.Tamil institutions and conventions mentioned in Kural by contrasting them with their Aryan parallels, thus warranting the natural opinion that Kural is an original Tamil work treating of the ethical, political and domestic ideals of the early Tamils. A morbid passion to deduce or derive everthing good in Tamil literature from a Sanskrit original will be as reasonable or acceptable to sober thought, as the equally culpable modern craze in evidence in some quarters to deny to Sanskrit literature all originality, and to try to convict all Aryan writers of plagiarism and perverse vandalism, and proclaim all Sanskrit books to be second-hand translations of nonexisting or imaginary Tamil originals, said to have been deliberately destroyed by the plagiarists to prevent discovery of their sins and to pretend originality. The sober truth almost always comes out all the clearer for all such frothy controversies. Kural may have its parallels to many rare ideas in great Sanskrit classics. But mere parallelism in ideas or concepts would prove nothing.

Numerous closest parallels are found in the poems of Shakespeare, Shadi and Kalidasa. But no sane student of literature will ever deduce connection between these master-poets on that account. Kural is an old Tamil classic, treasuring up all that is valluable or worth preserving in early Tamil culture: and its merit cannot be detracted merely by suggested similitude between some ideas or customs or institutions referred to therein and those in other Sanskrit, or for that matter in Arabic or Greek writings. Its age, as its worth, is to be tested by other testimonies acceptable to known methods of logical and historic comparison and research. I have attempted so far to equate and weigh all the available materials and literary proofs, which to my mind strongly negative the current tales regarding the birth of Kural and warrant a very much older age to it than what these stories would prescribe for it. The natal sphere of Kural, it appears to me, we must trace in the perihelion of the second and the aphelion of the 3rd Sangam.

Thiruvalluvar

Dr. S. Somasundara Bharathiar
Pasumalai, Madurai: Navalar Somasundara Bharathiar Educational Charity Trust; (1925). 1966, PP. 1-23.

6

CRITICAL STUDIES IN KURAL

M.S. PURNALINGAM PILLAI

Opening Study I

The name "Thiruvalluvar" means "the great man of the Valluva community" and the title "Kural" signifies the metre of the poem. Both the author and his work have borne no proper or distinctive names. Nor is anything reliable known either of his parentage, or of his career. But the work exists or is extant as a whole, unadulterated by schismatics and unimpaired or untampered with by copyists in the procession of ages. That the poet was a keen observer of nature, animate and inanimate, a diligent student of ancient classics on ahapporul and purapporul, on rhetoric and dialectic, on morality and statecraft, on agriculture and medicine, on folk-lore, tree-and-plant-lore, and on sex psychology and erotic diplomacy, and was a practical thinker and reformer, is beyond all cavil or question. Nobody doubts his poetic artistry (vide Tiru-Valluva-mallai, stanza 45, `elutthu-asai etc.') and his noble sentiments in his master-piece of Tamil literature composed of apophthegms in brief couplets. How a close study of this anthology would benefit a modern reader deserves consideration. Does it throw any light on the pressing problems of the day? Let the reader go over the couplets 21, 322, 373, 401, 410, 440, 533, 543, 560, 581, 636, 683, 725, 727, 743, 783, 941 to know the extent of his erudition.

The settled rule of every code requires,
Their greatness who, renouncing all, true to their rule have stood. 21

Let those that need, partake your meal; guard everything that lives;
This is the chief and sum of lore that hoarded wisdom gives. 322

To self-oblivious men no praise; this rule, as highest good,
Decisive wisdom sums of every school. 533

These two - the code renowned, and spies,
In these let king confide as eyes. 581

When native subtilty combines sound scholastic lore
'T is subtilty surpassing all which nothing stands before. 636

By rule, to dialectic art your mind apply.
That in the council fearless you make an apt reply. 725

To those who lack the hero's eye what can the sword avail?
Or Science what, to those before the council keen who quail. 726

As shining sword before the foe which sexless being bears,
Is science learned by him the council's face who fears 727

Height, breadth, strength, difficult access;
Science declares a fort must these possess. 743

The learned books court three, with a wind as first; of these
As any one prevails or fails, It will cause disease. 941

Vide 1078 for the sugar-cane; 104,144,1282 for the millet; 433, 1282 for the palmyra; 216 for the fruit-bearing tree; 1008 for the poison tree; 870 for the thorn tree; 217 for the medicine tree; 274 for the rush or thicket; 1304 for the valli or the creeper; 965 for the abrus seed (Kuntri); 621 for the pakadu or cattle; 486 for the ram; 273,599 for the tiger; 969 for the yak or wild ox or fawn; 814 for the horse; 195 for the crocodile; 678,758,772 for the elephant; 481,527, for the crow and the owl; 1120 for the annam or swan, and the sensitive plant (nerunji); 490 for the kokku or heron; 1081 for the peacock and its feathers (peeli); 500 for the jackal, and 763 for the rat and the snake.

The modern reader will find in this classical poem much food for thought, reflection and action. The theosophist will discover the poet's theosophy in Study I. In it God is personal and impersonal and Truth. The moralist will be satisfied with his precepts and maxims on hate and the evil-doer. Shakespeare has,

Love thyself last; cherish those hearts that hate thee,
Corruption wins not more than honest.
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace
To silence envious tongues, be just and fear not;
Let all the ends thou aim'st be thy Country's,
Thy God's and Truth's.

Vide Study VI on "Virtues and Vices"

To punish wrong, with kindly benefits the docrs ply,
Thus shame their souls; but pass the ill unheeded by. 314

With overweening pride when men with injuries assail,
By thine own righteous dealing shall thou mightily prevail. 158

What fruit doth your perfection yield you say!
Unless to men who work you ill you good repay. 987

The social reformer will murmur that the poet has not done justice to womankind as he praises a wife for her implicit obedience to her lord as a God and gives her no equality and liberty that the new or the smart woman fights for in these days. But he will be immensely pleased with the poet's strictures on the caste system, on toddy-drinking, gambling and concupiscence or debauchery, on killing and flesh eating, and with his appreciation of hospitality or feeding strangers. Vide the chapters bearing these titles. It was too early for a poet who had lived eighteen hundred years ago to dream of baby marriages and baby widows or to legislate for them, as the post-puberty (arivai) marriage was the only system in vogue then and that, as a result of courtship and self-choice. The poet does not recognise the necessity for any religious ceremony or sanction to bind the parties in live, as the country was not priest-ridden at the time.

The labourite will be delighted with the dignity of labour maintained by the author and with the sweetness of self earned pottage. Vide Chapters 60-62.

Nothing is sweeter than to taste the toil-won cheer,
Though mess of pottage as tasteless as the water clear. 106

Even thin gruel is ambrosia to him
Who has earned it by labour. (Ibid)

He will find satisfaction in the condemnation of poverty due to sloth and mendicancy adopted for ease and freedom.

The religious reformer will derive pleasure from the poet's tirade against mere formalism or ritualism and self-mortifying and sham asceticism and from the espousing of tapas or penitential meditation.

The political reformer will learn much from the chapters on state-craft, on embassy and spying, and on the management of foes and famines.

Not lance gives kings the victory,
But sceptre swayed with equity. 546

The educational reformer will see that technical education imparted, if it is to do good, must be based on one's special aptitude and should not be determined by heredity or custom.

As each man's special aptitude is known
Bid each man make that special work his own. 518

Besides the knowledge, and wisdom derived by the poet from his nature studies and from his perusal or mastery of books which he has used in an ample measure in the composition of this unique work, there are direct references to his life-experiences which reflect the nobility and the mental calibre of our vates sacer. Three of the couplets bearing on such experiences are quoted below:

Of all that men acquire we know not any greater gain,
Than that which by the birth of learned children men obtain. 61

Of all good things we've scann'd with studious care
There's naught that can with truth fulness compare. 300

The base resemble men in outward form, I ween;
But counterpart exact them I've never seen. 1071

The first shows his love of children, the second exhibits his passion for veracity, and the third manifests his contempt for baseness.

In fine, the "perfect man" of Thiruvalluvar, though he resembles other mortals in the fact of his being mother-born and in the possession of parts, arms and limbs, making up the human frame, differs from them in his meritorious work and in his moral excellence.

> All beings that live are one in circumstance of birth;
> Diversities of works give each his special work. 972

> Men are not one, because their members seem alike to outward view;
> Similitude of kindred quality makes likeness true 993

Here is a clear statement contradicting the claim of superior birth set up by priesthood which has hypnotised the unthinking masses to be willing slaves and put down their desire for uplift as blasphemy and sacrilege. Able reformers like Kapilar and Ramanujar have failed to shatter the citadel of birth supremacy, but the only effective means for its demolition is the right kind of education among the literate which, by inculcating liberty equality, and fraternity, opens their mental eye to the dense darkness of ignorance into which they have been thrust from time immemorial. Here is also a caution against the suppressed and depressed classes that they resemble the other mortals in their physique and in their blood... What divide man from man are his learning, his wealth, and his moral worth, but these are not inseparable barriers. Despite such an able advocacy of man as man, the poet alludes to pirap-pu olukkam, conduct arising from or due to his birth as seer's or scholar's son in the subjoined distich.

> Though he forget the scholar may regain his learned lore;
> Failing in decorum due, regard is gone for ever more. 134

The orthodox man may, however, gloat over this apparent slip or rather innuendo and still claim the poet as perfectly his own in respect of his belief in the soul's immortality and transmigration, the existence of worlds above and below, in the superior virtues of asceticism, and in the birth - termination by absolute renunciation.

This triple treatise of Morality, Material Prosperity and Affection in 133 chapters, each of ten couplets, won immediate applause in the author's lifetime. Kalladaar has praised it as a moral code and community, and has set forth the way of good from the world's point of view, unbiased by any narrow sectarian prejudices. Hence its popularity all the world over - in England, Italy, France, Germany, not to speak of India. "Though dead, he yet speaketh". "To think is to live; and he, by whom the reality and responsibility of life on earth was thought out in all its manifold bearings and aspects, still lives in the loving memory of millions. Nineteen centuries have not diminished the weight of his authority or the vitality of his utterances. He lives, and his fame will increase with the flight of time; and as long as men continue to revere the true and the good, will the words of the poet continue to inspire them; and gain him a seat with the great teachers of the world."

Critical Studies in Kural
1942. Rpt. 1999 (IITS) pp. 9 - 15.

7

SOCIAL ETHICS IN THE 'Tirukkural'

REV. H. A. POPLEY

In the present phase of India's development as a free nation great emphasis is being rightly placed upon 'Social Ethics' and upon the need for the application to present-day conditions of the ethical values and principles found in ancient Indian polity. The conception of dharma, which is the fundamental truth of Indian Ethics, is concerned not merely with the ethical principles of the individual in his personal life, but also with the whole range of ethical theory for the citizen in his relationships with the State and with society.

The same thing is true of the ideal of 'Aram' the Tamil equivalent of the Sanskrit 'Dharma'. This is clearly shown in the 'Tirukkural', the ethical source book of the Tamil peoples, and the second section of this work, called 'Porutpal' deals very thoroughly with the principles of Social Ethics. Says Sri C. Rajagopalachariar in his introduction to his translation of this section, "These seventy chapters (i.e. chs. 39-108) lay down, with characteristic terseness, the principles that should govern the conduct of wise and good men in the affairs of the world." So it behoves us to study them in these days in order to see what this Tamil sage has to tell us of the principles that should find expression in the life of our State and the society of our people

in these days when the government and work of the State is entirely in our own hands.

The first section of the 'Tirukkural," which is called Illaraviyal,' (chs 5-38) and may be translated 'Ethics of the Domestic State' deals especially with the principles that should govern the life and conduct of the individuals in their personal lives and in their families, though there is in this section also much which has application to the ethics of the citizen of State. In this article, however, we shall deal especially with social ethics as they are set forth in the second section of the 'Tirukkural'.

Like the ethical teaching of the Bible and other such great books of 'dharma' the ethical teaching of the 'Tirukkural' is applicable to present-day conditions and it is surprising to find how relevant much of it is with the needs of citizenship in free India today.

This is partly due to the fact that Tiruvalluvar was no sectarian in religion but was one who had taken the best from the various religions which he had come into contact with and had woven them all into a beautiful and many-coloured fabric of ethical teaching, in the same way that he wove yarns of different colour into the saris and dhotis that he made.

Most commentators consider that he had some knowledge of the Artha Sastra of Chanakya (Kautilya) and this is possible as Kanchi, the capital of the Pallava kingdom from the second to the fourth century, was the birthplace of Chanakya and he was the chief minister of Chandragupta, the Maurya Emperor, from 321 B.C. It is not likely that Tiruvalluvar knew Sanskrit, and one must therefore believe that a Brahmin of Kanchi who knew the Artha Sastra had explained a great deal of it to the poet. There are two matters in which the 'Kural' definitely departs from the Artha Sastra. One of these is that the end justifies the means. The kural' never gives any support to this Nazi thesis. The Artha Sastra, however, justifies crooked politics for the good of the kingdom. Further, the Artha Sastra also

regards the king as divine and as wielding divine power. The furthest that the TIRUKKURAL goes is to say that the 'king who rules justly and guards his realm shall be considered as a god to men' (39 : 8) So the divine name is given to a king because of his qualities and not because of his position. Sri Rajagopalachariar in his translation of the verse above gives the following:

"It is only if the king acts according to the law and protects his people that he will be regarded truly as the Lord's deputy."

Parimelalagar in his "urai" gives the following as the meaning of this stanza. 'though he was born as a man, by his deeds he is considered as a god to men'

We have to remember that Tiruvalluvar did not know the democratic state as it exists today. While there is ample evidence that in the Tamil Kingdoms there were truly self-governing villages with a real democratic constitution, the over-all state was not democratic and the head of the state was a king who was a real ruler, assisted by his counsellors. But even though this was true we can understand from Tiruvalluvar's teaching much about the duties and qualities of leadership in a democratic state, and also learn a good deal about the citizen and his responsibilities. Thus, in studying the teaching of the TIRUKKURAL on Social Ethics we shall consider the stanzas on kingship as applicable to the ideal of leadership in modern days in a democratic state. In some case the stanza refers to the state as such rather than to the individual leader.

First of all we shall consider the teaching of chapter 39 the first chapter of this section on the State. This chapter is called இறைமாட்சி in Tamil which is usually translated as 'kingly excellence', but which Sri Rajagopalachariar takes to mean 'the prosperous state', thus emphasising the totality of its rulers and citizens rather than the one person set at the head of the state. The first stanza of this chapter gives the six essentials for a prosperous state, according to the translation of Sir Rajagopalachariar, as follows: 'an adequate army, an industrious people, ample food resources, wise and alert ministers of state, alliance with foreign powers and dependable fortifications,' This is a free translation of a terse and succinct verse and is quite justified if

we think of the state rather than of the ruler of the state. The stanza is as follows:

படைகுடி கூழ் அமைச்சு நட்பரண் ஆறும்
உடையான் அரசருள் ஏறு *(39:1)*

The next two stanzas give the qualities of leadership that are necessary if the state is to be rightly guided. The first of these is as follows:

அஞ்சாமை, ஈகை, அறிவூக்கம், இந்நான்கும்
எஞ்சாமை வேந்தற் கியல்பு *(39:2)*

Courage, charity, wit and grit - these four unfailing, the kingly nature make.

தூங்காமை கல்வி துணிவுடைமை, இம்மூன்றும்
நீங்கா நிலன் ஆள்பவற்கு. *(39:3)*

Alertness, Wisdom and decisiveness - these three should ne'er be lacking in rulers of the world.'

These are all qualities which we expect from our leaders in a democratic state, and unless men and women of such qualities come to leadership in the Indian States our country cannot be expected to progress. It is clear from these two stanzas how modern Tiruvalluvar is in his conception of leadership in a well-organised state. The next stanza sums all these up in a clear and convincing fashion:

அறன் இழுக்காதல்லவை நீக்கி, மறன் இழுக்கா
மான முடையது அரசு, *(39:4)*

'From Dharma's path ne'er swerving, adharma to remove, with courage sure, to keep one's honour bright is kingship true.'

Then Tiruvalluvar goes on to speak of the duties and responsibilities of leadership.

இயற்றலும் ஈட்டலும் காத்தலும் காத்த
வகுத்தலும் வல்லது அரசு *(39:5)*

'He is a king, who is able to arrange for the production of wealth, the conservation of resources, the defence of the state and the right distribution of wealth'

Further in a democratic regime, the leader must be one who is easily accessible to all the citizens and who is not given to harsh language.

காட்சிக் கெளியன், கடுஞ் சொல்லன் அல்லனேல்
மீக்கூறு மன்னன் நிலம் *(39:6)*

A Country which has such leaders will be acclaimed by all other countries as a great country. A leader must also be able to give with kindliness and to protect those who follow him. Such a leader will be able to gain a wide influence and that not only in his own country. Then follows the stanza which compares the king who acts justly to a god. From this it is clear that the leader of the state must act according to the law and see that the people are protected from the various ills that may come upon them.

The next stanza is rather a striking one and shows the range of the vision of Tiruvalluvar. It says that the leader of the state who is able to listen calmly to the criticisms of his ministers and people will become more than a state leader, he will become a world leader. Gandhiji well illustrated this truth.

செவிகைப்பச் சொல் பொறுக்கும் பண்புடை வேந்தன்
கவிகைக் கீழ்த் தங்கும் உலகு. *(39:9)*

Rajaji translates this as follows:

> 'The world will rest under the umbrella of the king who has the quality of listening to the bitter advice of his ministers.'

The last stanza of this chapter sums up the whole matter and says that four things are required in the supreme leader.

கொடை அளி செங்கோல் குடியோம்பல், நான்கும்
உடையானாம் வேந்தர்க் கொளி. *(39:10)*

> 'He is the light of kings who has these four things Beneficence, benevolence, rectitude and care for his people.'

Thus in this chapter we have clearly brought to our minds the qualities and capacities that should go with leadership in a state. These are especially necessary in a modern democratic

state and it is the duty of the citizens to see that they elect to parliament only those who possess these qualities and capacities and so will be able to guide the state aright.

In the next place we have to find out what Tiruvalluvar has to say about the qualities of citizenship and how far they are applicable to the needs of this day.

It is remarkable that immediately after this chapter on the ideal leader or 'the progressive state' as Rajaji calls it there should come a chapter which emphasises the value of education in a state. This chapter and the next on Ignorance' show how greatly in those early days in the Tamil Nad, education was valued and how necessary this humble weaver considered it to be for all the citizens of a state if the state was to progress.

The responsibility of those who are educated to pass on to others the education they have received is clearly brought out by the metaphor of the well:

தொட்டனைத்து ஊறும் மணற் கேணி, மாந்தர்க்குக்
கற்றனைத்து ஊறும் அறிவு (40:6)

Water will flow from a well in the sand in proportion to the depth it is dug, and knowledge will similarly flow from a man in proportion to his learning.'

In another stanza he shows the value of education especially for those who travel, incidentally making it clear that in those days the Tamils were great travellers.

யாதானு நாடாமால் ஊராமால், என் ஒருவன்
சாந்துணையுங் கல்லாத வாறு (40 : 7)

'All lands to learned men belong, all towns are home

How then can men remain unlearned till their dying day?'

He Values learning even more than wealth and says:

கேடில் விழுச் செல்வம் கல்வி ஒருவற்கு,
மாடல்ல மற்றை யவை. (40 : 10)

'Learning is the true imperishable riches for anyone; All other things are not true wealth.

In the next chapter on 'Ignorance' he shows the uselessness of those who will not learn. They are not only poor in themselves, but they do not produce anything of value to the state.

உளர் என்னு மாத்திரையர் அல்லால், பயவாக்
களரனையர் கல்லா தவர். (41 : 6)

'The ignorant are like useless brackish land;'

They are - and that is all that can be said.

Though Tiruvalluvar does not actually apply these stanzas to state policy it is clear enough that he expects the leaders of the state to foster and extend education.

There is a chapter on 'The Correction of faults' which shows up clearly the evils which can ruin good government and indeed the whole state. Three great faults of those in such position are mentioned, namely: greed, improper pride and sensual pleasures; and Tiruvalluvar states that these faults in the leaders will produce trouble in the state, and indeed are 'a deadly enemy.'

இவறலு மாண்பிறந்த மானமு மாணா
உவகையும் ஏதம் இறைக்கு. (44 : 2)

குற்றமே காக்க, பொருளாகக், குற்றமே
அற்றம் தரூஉம் பகை. (44 : 4)

'Avarice, improper pride and sensual pleasure
Are serious faults in a King.
Guard against such faults as a great matter;
For such faults are a deadly enemy.

The TIRUKKURAL teaches that leaders should act with energy if the state is to flourish and the people also should copy this and show the same energy. This is shown very clearly in chapter 60. We are reminded of the emphasis that the Union and the State ministers are placing today on the need for hard work by all the people if the state is to go forward.

உடையர் எனப்படுவ தூக்கம், அஃதில்லார்
உடைய துடையரோ மற்று. (60 : 1)

'Tis energy alone makes wealth worthwhile;
Who lack it own not even what they have.'

ஆக்கம் இழந்தேம் என் றல்லாவார்; ஊக்கம்
ஒருவந்தம் கைத்துடை யார். (60 : 3)

'They who have euduring energy will never trouble themselves, saying "We have lost our wealth."

The ills that follow idleness both in the family and in the state are clearly shown in grim pictures.

குடி மடிந்து குற்றம் பெருகும் மடி மடிந்து
மாண்ட உஞற்றி லவர்க்கு. (61 : 4)

'Family greatness will be destroyed and faults will increase in those who give way to laziness and who do not labour with dignity.

கெடுநீர் மறவி மடிதுயில் நான்கும்
கெடு நீரார் காமக் கலன். (61 : 5)

'Tardiness, forgetfulness, sloth and sleep -
These four are pleasure boats of ruin grim.'

There is an important chapter on 'Righteous rule,' called செங்கோன்மை (ch.55) and in the first stanza of this chapter the four important factors that go to make up such a righteous rule are set forth. They are said to be first, the careful examination of all crimes against the state; then second, the showing of no undue favour to any; third, acting impartially at all times; and fourth, the awarding of punishment in accord with justice. Again and again the need of acting with full justice is stressed.

அந்தணர் நூற்கும் அறத்திற்கும் ஆதியாய்
நின்றது மன்னவன் கோல். (55.3)
'The authority of the state lies the firm support of the laws of the wise and of the virtuous life.

இயல்புளிக் கோலோச்சும் மன்னவ னாட்ட
பெயலும் விளையுளும் தொக்கு (55:5)

'Even the elements will give their blessing
to a state where justice rules.'

வேலன்று வென்றி தருவது, மன்னவன்
கோலதூம் கோடா தெனின். (55:6)

'A state does not win victory through military might, but through righteousness.'

The negative side of this truth is put before us in the next chapter on 'Unjust rule.'

முறை கோடி மன்னவன் செய்யின், உறைகோடி
ஒல்லாது வானம் பெயல் (56:9)

'If the king acts unjustly rain will be unseasonale,
And the heavens will withhold their showers.'

There is a separate chapter on the State itself, which Tiruvalluvar calls 'நாடு' (ch. 74). As Sri Rajagopalachariar says in his book, "This is something more than the land, It includes the inhabitants of the land and its resources. The requisites for a good state are industrious producers, good and learned men to form the intellectual class and highminded men of wealth. Thus labour, knowledge and wealth are the elements that make a prosperous state."

தள்ளா விளையுளும் தக்காரும் தாழ்விலாச்
செல்வரும் சேர்வது நாடு. (74:1)

Parimelalagar makes the second of these 'the virtuous instead of 'the intellectuals' and that is probably the correct interpretation. So the three essential elements of a good State will be: production by labour, virtuous leaders, and merchants who produce wealth.

The following stanza reminds us of the ideal of the welfare state to which we are aiming today.

உறு பசியும் ஓவாப் பிணியும் செறுபகையும்
சேரா தியல்வது நாடு (74 : 4)

'The ideal state is one in which there is no unappeased hunger, no incurable diseases, no destructive enemies,'

Thus freedom from hunger, freedom from disease, and freedom from external aggression are the marks of the ideal state. There are also three other freedoms essential to an ideal state. It must be free from petty divisions, from internal evils and from destructive savages (74 : 5).

The ornaments of a good state are said to be the following five : freedom from disease, economic security, good produce, general happiness and peace.

பிணியின்மை, செல்வம், விளைவின்பம், ஏமம்
அணியென்ப நாட்டிற்கிவ் வைந்து *(74 : 8)*

These are very modern and presuppose a foundation of education as was emphasised in previous chapter.

In a later chapter on the importance of wealth to the state it is clearly stated that unless such wealth is acquired by right means it is not to be desired

அருளொடும் அன்பொடும் வாராப் பொருளாக்கம்
புல்லார் புரள விடல் *(76 : 5)*

'Let kings avoid the seeking of wealth which
has not come with grace and love,'

The chapter on 'Citizenship' or குடிசெயல்வகை as it is called by Tiruvalluvar, (ch. 103) is a very important one for the right conception of the duty of the citizens. As Rajaji says it means 'how to develop the community.' The very first stanza of this chapter shows the need for every individual in the state to render service to the community.

கருமஞ் செய ஒருவன் கைதூவேன் என்னும்
பெருமையின் பீடுடைய தில் *(103 : 1)*

'There is no higher greatness for the individual than being ever ready to render service to the community'

This is amplified in the next stanza.

ஆள்வினையும் ஆன்ற அறிவும் என இரண்டின்
நீள்வினையால் நீளும் குடி. *(103 : 2)*

'The community prospers through the untiring effort of those with industry and ripe knowledge.'

Even God Himself will come to the aid of those who endeavour to help the community. Tiruvalluvar clothes this idea in a picturesque simile.

குடி செய்வல் என்னும் ஒருவற்குத் தெய்வம்
மடிதற்றுத் தான் முந்துறும். *(103 : 3)*

'God Himself will gird up His loins and go before to help one who is determined to help the community.'

Such a selfless worker for the community will be welcomed as a friend by the whole world.

குற்ற மிலனாய்க் குடிசெய்து வாழ்வானைச்
சுற்றமாச் சுற்றும் உலகு. *(103 : 5)*

'The world will befriend and gather round the man
Who lives a blameless life of service to his people.'

There are heroes of peace as well as of war, who have to take up the burdens of the community.

அமரகத்து வன் கண்ணர்போலத் தமரகத்தும்
ஆற்றுவார் மேற்றே பொறை. *(103 : 7)*

'Like heroes in the battlefield, the burden of service
Falls upon those who are capable in the community.'

For the servants of the community there is no convenience of time. They must always be ready to serve.

குடி செய்வார்க் கில்லை பருவம், மடிசெய்து
மானம் கருதக் கெடும். *(103 : 8)*

There is no special season for the servants of the com
munity;
If they think of laziness or false dignity all is lost.'

To the man who serves the community his body will be like a pot full of troubles.

இடும்பைக்கே கொள்கலம் கொல்லோ, குடும்பத்தைக்
குற்றம் மறைப்பான் உடம்பு. *(103 : 9)*

'His body is a pot of troubles,
who seeks to save the people from all ills.''

Rajaji has the following comment on this : ''All reform is built on the consecrated suffering of reformers. That sorrow is the only immediate reward of public service." No community

can stand unless it has such selfless workers. This is brought out in the next stanza.

இடுக்கண் கால் கொன்றிட வீழும், அடுத்தூன்றும்
நல்லாள் இலாத குடி. (103 : 10)

'If there are none to support it,
The community will fall at the stroke 'of the axe of misfortune.'

The next chapter of the KURAL deals with agriculture. So our weaver-poet recognised the important place of agriculture in the economy of the state and knew that the prosperity of a state depends on the farmer and his ability to produce. The very first stanza of this chapter makes this clear.

சுழன்றும் ஏர்ப் பின்ன துலகம், அதனால்
உழந்தும் உழவே தலை. (104 : 1)'

'சுடியஅ றாநசந லடிர றடைடஇ வாந றடிசடன அரளவ
படி நொனேே வாந 'டடிரபா ;

Farming, though toilsome, is man's supreme employ. The world lives at the grass roots and it is only as the farmer produces that the rest of men can prosper. This truth was clear in the days of Tiruvalluvar even as it is today.

உழுவார் உலகத்தார்க் காணி, அஃதாற்றாது
எழுவாரை எல்லாம் பொறுத்து. (104 : 2)

'The linchpins of society the farmers are ;
supporting other toilers all who do not plough'

The tillers of the soil are the only ones who live in the full sense of the world. Others merely exist.

உழுதுண்டு வாழ்வாரே வாழ்வார், மற்றெல்லாம்
தொழுதுண்டு பின்செல் பவர். (104 : 3)

'They only live who plough and eat ;
The rest, as followers, just serve and eat.'

Even the ascetics will not be able to get on unless the tiller of the soil does his part well.

உழவினார் கைமடங்கின் இல்லை, விழைவதூஉம்
விட்டேம் என் பார்க்கு நிலை. (104 : 2)

'If the farmer's hands go slack,
Even those who have left all will fail'

Tiruvalluvar knows also the need for continuous work on the land. The fields cannot be left to look after themselves.

செல்லான் கிழவன் இருப்பின், நிலம் புலந்து
இல்லாளின் ஊடிவிடும். (104 : 9)

'If farmers quiet sit and go not to their land,
Twill sulk and take the huff, like sulking wife.

Rajaji in his remarks on this stanza says : Sellan (செல்லான்) denotes the need of daily personal attention ;iruppin (இருப்பின்) denotes the need for unceasing activity ; kizhavan (கிழவன்) denotes that the duties of attention and care cannot be delegated ;The need for making use of all the land available is emphasised in the last stanza.

இலம் என்று அசைஇ யிருப்பாரைக் காணின்
நிலம் என்னும் நல்லாள் நகும். (104: 10)

'That kindly dame called Earth doth laugh
When she sees idlers sitting still and saying
'We have nought'.

Thus we find in the stanzas of this humble weaver-poet of the second century A.D. a great deal of helpful teaching on Social Ethics as can be applied to the conditions of the people in this technological age of the twentieth century. This teaching is expressed in unforgettable stanzas of unexampled terseness and crystal clarity.

Tiruvalluvar did not set out to write a text book on Social Ethics but he was concerned with the needs and life of the common man and with the welfare of the state in his day. In his reflections upon these subjects he has given to us this timeless teaching on the life of a good citizen in a welfare state. He does not give us a picture far removed from the actual conditions of

life in his day, but reveals to us in simple and striking language how we can overcome the perennial difficulties that face man in his upward path. He has made it clear that faith in God is part of the make-up of the good citizen. This is shown again and again by the references to divine help that occur incidentally in many of these stanzas. It comes out very clearly in the first chapter of the KURAL. Here are two stanzas from that chapter:

அறவாழி அந்தணன்தாள் சேர்ந்தார்க் கல்லால்
பிறவாழி நீந்தல் அரிது. *(1 : 8)*

Tis hard to swim this world's wide sea,
Unless we cling to Him who is ocean of grace and good.

பிறவிப் பெருங்கடல் நீந்துவர் நீந்தார்
இறைவன் அடிசேரா தார். *(1:10)*

'Who then can swim this mighty sea of births?
Not they who cling not to our Lord's feet.

In these stanzas on the State and its citizens we have some simple practical precepts of a good state and a good citizen, which we shall do well to study carefully and to follow more closely these days.

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TIRUKKURAL

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PREFACE

TIRUKKURAL which is called the Veda of the Tamils, is a book of universal importance. From the very fact that it is claimed by the various religious sects which have sprung up in South India, is a proof that it is acceptable to all. Various commentators belonging to various religious denominations wrote commentaries on the work according to their own predilections. The work is also translated into various European languages. Hence, it may appear at the outset that an English translation of the work at present may be unnecessary and superfluous. But there is a justification for this procedure. There is an interval of several centuries between the composition of the original and the appearance of the commentaries. The various commentators appear long after the disappearance of the original culture and civilisation whose picture is presented in the original. Hence, it is necessary to emphasise the fundamental ideal in the original background, viz the ideal of *ahimsa*.

This ideal is expounded in all its implications - ethical, social and economic. The exposition in all these points of view is fundamentally different from the treatment found in the Vedic school. The purpose of this translation is to emphasise this point of view and to bring out the unique character and value of the ancient culture and civilisation of the

Tamil land. I have freely consulted the Tamil commentaries of PARIMELALAGAR, MANAK - KUDAVAR, KAVIRAJA PANDITAR and KALINGARAYAR. The English translations of Dr. Pope and Colonel Ellis and the Latin translation of Dr. Graul and Fr. Beschi were also consulted. These translations are mainly based upon the Tamil commentaries consulted by these European scholars. It may be stated here that among all these scholars, it was Colonel Ellis who had a most clear and correct insight into the nature of the cultural background of this unique work. I owe to Colonel Ellis, the point of view adopted in this translation.

The book is intended mainly for the English speaking public. The ideal of *ahimsa,* the bed-rock on which the structure of **TIRUKKURAL** is raised, has been given a world importance by Mahatma Gandhi who won the freedom of India with the help of that weapon. He hoped throughout his life that this ideal of non-violence would be adopted by all the nations as a means of solving the various political and economic problems which confronted them. It is hoped that a study of this work will enable the readers to realise that, 2000 years ago there was a social organisation based on this principle, guaranteeing social and economic justice and equality. It is not necessary to emphasise the denominational aspect of the religious background, because the ideal of *ahimsa* is now accepted by all the Indian religions irrespective of their denominational difference. It is a good augury that the modern free Indian Republic has accepted this basic principle of *ahimsa,* and let us hope that it will gradually leaven the thought of the modern world.

Jainism and Tirukkural

The book TIRUKKURAL, which was composed about the first century B. C., is an exposition of the fundamental principles of Jainism. A reader will easily be able to perceive that important Jaina doctrines relating to religion and ethics form the basis for various chapters. The first chapter contains the adoration of both

Arhat paramesti and Siddha Paramesti. We have mentioned before that the Aptha or Lord, as adored by Jains, is called Thrithankara/ one who provides the ship to cross the ocean of samsara. The ship which he provides for the benefit of mankind is the dharma which is indentical with ahimsa or universal love. Such a divine personality is also called Arhan or the fit object for worship. We have also mentioned before that in the world's history such divine persons appear to revitalise the dharma of the world. Such a divine person by performing tapas qualifies himself to lead the world in the right path. This qualification consists in his destroying the four harmful karmas called khati karmas. By the destruction of these four karmas, the divine personality attains four eminent qualities of ananta gnyana infinite knowledge, and ananta darsana, infinite perception ananta Virya, infinite power, and ananta sukha, infinite bliss. Endowed with such spiritual qualities of an infinite nature, he becomes an omnicient being immersed in his own infinite spiritual bliss. Such an omnicient divine personlity, called Arhan, does not quit the world because of self-satisfaction. His real function as an Arhat Paramesti only begins thereafter. He spends the rest of his life in the world for the benefit of mankind. He goes about from place to place preaching the dharma. According to the Jaina tradition, Devendra constructs for the Lord an edifice called samavasarana. This structure serves two different purposes. It moves from place to place as a vehicle for Sarvagnya or the omnicient Lord. When it reaches a particular town, it also serves as an audience-hall were people gather to listen to the dharma revealed by the Lord. Devendra further provides paraphernalia symbolising the spiritual sovereignty of the omnicient Lord. Two of these are worth mentioning; the divine lotus and the wheel of dharma. At the feet of the divine Lord lotus is provided by Devendra. The Lord's feet are to rest upon this divine lotus when he travels in this vehicle or when he preaches dharma to the people assembled in the hall. While travelling in this divine vehicle of samavasarana. the wheel of dharma or dharma chakra

is supossed to move in front of this samavasarana; the dharma chakra thus symbolising the spiritual sovereignty of the Lord over the three worlds: the world of Devas above, the world of man and other living beings in the middle, and the world of pitiful beings living in the hell below. The omnicient Lord thus equipped with four infinite qualities remains in the world as a jeevan mukta engaged in dharma prabhavana. In the course of time, the four, harmless karmas called akhati karma, are also got rid of. When these are destroyed, there is no rebirth for the self. When there is no rebirth, certainly there can be no body built up for the soul. Consequently, there can be no age associated with the body. Since there is no future rebirth or appearance of the body, there is no sex differentiation either, whether a person is a male or female or non-sexual neuter-a distinction associated with the structure of the body and hence it cannot be applied to the purse self. When the self realises its true nature, it is called Siddha Paramesti, the perfect being. He cannot be spoken of as a male, female or neuter. Sex distinctions are not applicable to him. Hence he is sexless. Therefore the self in the siddha state, besides having the four infinite qualities arising from the destruction of the four khati karmas, has in addition four qualities arising after the destruction of the four akhati karmas. Thus the siddha in his perfect state is said to have eight divine qualities.

The first chapter in TIRUKKURAL consists of some stanzas specially addressed to the Arhat Paramesti, and other stanzas addressed to Siddha Paramesti. Hence it is the worship of both Arhan and Siddhan. Arhat is worshipped because of his merciful gift of dharma to the people in the world. Siddha is worshipped because it represents the final spiritual perfection which is the goal of life. To the readers of the first chapter in TIRUKKURAL, this fact will be found evident. The author tries to point out the importance of the worship of these tow great divine ideals. He emphasises the fact that the only way to escape from samsara is to reach the goal of life and to accept and adopt in life the dharma revealed by the Jina or the conqueror of samsara.

It is a tradition among Jaina thinkers to consider the Jaina Sangh, the goup of saints, and the Jaina Dharma, revealed by the omnicient Lord, as also worthy of adoration. Thus the four ideal existences, the Arhat, the Siddha, the Sangha, and the Dharma, are the four objects of supreme value worthy of adoration. Man, aiming at the goal of life, has to take refuge and surrender himself to these four ideal entities. Thus in one of the prayers in the Prakrit language, the author of TIRUKKURAL himself emphasises this aspect in the following:-

Chatari Mangalam-the four pure auspicious things which are called Arhanta, Siddha, Sangha and Dharma.

Chatari. Lokotama-Four. Super eminent things in the world which are Arhanta, Siddha, Sangha and Dharma, revealed by Kevali,

Therefore I take refuge in these four:-

ARHANTA SARANAM PAVAJJAMI
SIDDHA SARANAM PAVAJJAMI
SADHU SARANAM PAVAJJAMI
KEVALI PANNATHO DHANMO SARANAM PAVAJJAMI.

Following this prayer, which the author himself has composed in Prakrit, he takes two more chapters to complete the divine adoration. The worship of the Sangha is given in the chapter on the noble saints who renounce the world, and he adores dharma in the fourth chapter where he emphasises the potency of Dharma. Thus, the first the third and the fourth chapters are devoted to the worship of four great divine entities: Arhat, Siddha, Sangha, and Dharma. A similar method of worship is adopted by Tirutthaka Devar/ the author of JIVIKA CHINTA-MANI. In the beginning of the work, he devotes two stanzas in adoration of Arhanta and Siddha, and in the third stanza, he adores Sangha and Dharma.

Thus, after workshipping the four supreme eminent spiritual beings, the author begins to deal with the real work of TIRUK-KURAL, expounding the ahimsa dharma in detail.

Before we proceed further, we have to notice that the conception of dharma found in TIRUKKURAL has no relation to the varnashrama dharma formulated by the authors of the Vedic school. Manu Dharma Sastra formulates the different characteristic dharmas for the different castes or varnas. The author of TIRUKKURAL defines dharma in terms of purity of heart. To be faultess in heart is just dharma. Any other form of dharma is a mere camouflage. Real happiness in the world is to be obtained only by living according to dharma, which means faultless life with a pure heart. This conception of dharma strictly emphasises the moral ideal which every human being ought to have in his life. This ideal does not recognise any social distinction between man and man. It will be obvious to the reader of the work that this conception of dharma is entirely different from the varnashrama dharma which is the basis of Vedic dharma. Chapter II about the utility of rain, forms really introduction to the work TIRUKKURAL. The arrangement ought to place this as the fourth after the chapters devoted to the adoration of the four great divine ideas. The ancient Tamil culture was mainly based upon agriculture. Agriculture was the foundation of the social organisation of the Tamil land. Hence, it was a custom among the ancient Tamil authors to emphasise the importance of rain. Agriculture cannot get on without rain. Rain is an indispensable necessity for the agriculturists. We cannot have food and other agricultural produce without timely rain. Without rain, man cannot have foodgrains to eat. Rain is therefore the real life principle of man and it is more so in an agricultural country.

The author divides the ethical code into two sections ; one relating to the householder and the other relating to the ascetic. Life in both these ethical aspects is made possible only by sufficient and timely rain. The householder who has the responsibility of producing foodgrains for the whole society must depend on rain for discharging his duties satisfactorily. He has to sustain not only himself but the whole soceity. Hence, the

responsibility on his shoulders is very great. The satisfactory fulfilment of this responsibility therefore depends on rain. The section of acetics in society is dependent upon the householder. The spiritual discipline, the ideal chosen by the ascetic, will not be possible without the support of the householder. Hence, the life of man in society whether we look at it from the point of view of the householder or the ascetic/ is found ultimately dependent upon rain. Rain is the ultimate foundation of social economy. This fact is emphasised in early Tamil classical literature. It is not surprising therefore that the author of TIRUKKURAL introduces this chapter as a sort of synopsis at the beginning, technically called Payiram. At the beginning of the great work dealing with the ethics of human society, the author starts with the ethics of the householder defining dharma as a guide for the householder in society. Speaking generally about the householders' life, the author emphasises the importance of the householder in social oganisation. The householders form the pillars of society. Without these pillars, the whole social structure will collapse. The life of the saint, though it is considered higher from the point of view of spiritual discipline, cannot get on without the support of the householder. Hence, the solidarity of the whole society depends upon the support given by the householder. Therefore, the author considers that the householder's life is really more important than the life of the ascetic who, by adopting the life of renunciation, severs all connections with the world. A house holder though he is fully immersed in social life, if he is guided by the ideal of universal love and purity of heart, must be considered as having a nobler life than the ascetic who for the purpose of achieveing this spiritual discipline departs from society altogether. After describing the intrinsic worth of the householder's life, the author further describes in detail the nature of home life, its constituent elements and its aim and ideal.

Home life naturally implies two persons husband and wife. No person can think of home life without a life-mate. Hence the author emphasises the fact that the importance of the home

life purely depends upon the quality of the life-mate. The work of the home life mainly depends upon the nature and quality of the wife who is the mistress of the house. The wife by her chastity and loyalty to her husband, makes her home practically a temple of worship. If the house has become a divine temple of worship, this divine atmosphere of the home is mainly dependent upon the mistress of the house. She need not go to any temple beyond her home for the purpose of worshipping the divine being, since her home itself has become the holy abode of divinity.

In descirbing home life, the author emphasises next the importance of children without whom the home will be empty. Husband and wife, to have satisfactory happiness in their home life, must have children. Only when they beget children will they have full scope for their parental affection. The wife cannot develop fully her maternal love if she is not blessed with a child. It is equally true with the male member of the household. Unless he has a child on which to bestow his paternal affection, he will be purely self-centred and isolated. Hence the first step in the full development of human personality is to have a chance of experienceing parental affection by which it learns to love somebody besides itself. Thus husband and wife learn to break the self-centred wall of isolation by including their children. A child born in the house hold is an event of happiness to the mother and father. Every stage in its development adds further happiness to its parents. It is a pleasure to them to listen to its first utterances of a few words. When the father takes interest in the education of his children it is the son who is given sufficient education to enable him to occupy the foremost place in society. That is the first duty of the father : when the son is so equipped with wide learning it is a symbol of culture. He must equip himself in society in a fitting manner. People who are impressed by his noble behaviour and admirable conduct in society, would exclaim that his father must be an extraordinarily lucky man to have the privilege of having such an exemplary person as his son. Thus, the husband and wife, while becoming the father and mother of such a son, enjoy complete domestic happiness.

What more is necessary for them? It is not enough for them to be satisfied with the circle of domestic happiness containing the parents and children alone. They must learn to have a wider iterest. They must include in their circle of life a large number of living beings, In the chapter on 'Universal Love and Benevolence', the author of TIRUKKURAL describes the positive content of the great ethical principle of ahimsa or non-violence. Non-violence does not consist merely in abstaining from injury to other living beings. It is much more positive than that. A person is expected to show kindness and sympathy to all living beings.If a living being is found in pain and suffering, a person out of sympathy and kindness must try to remove the source of its suffering. This character of universal love and mercy to all living beings is the intrinsic human virtue, according to the author of TIRUKKURAL. A Person not endowed with such a quality is not far different from the ordinary animal, in common with which he has an organic body and nothing more. To justify his human nature, he must try to transcend his human personality. This unbounded kindness and mercy, the intrinsic divine element in man, must be fully developed so that the human personality may grow to its full stature, expressing the divine element in human personality. Equipped with such universal kindness and mercy, the householder is expected to show this element of love by the way in which he entertains the needy persons. He must show his hospitality by being a generous host to all those guests who approach him. The person who may be the prospective guest may be classified under two heads. One, he may be an ordinary layman seeking food to appease his hunger. Or, he may be an ascetic passing down the street expecting food from some generous household. In any case, the householder is expected to welcome such guests and satisfy them by stintless generosity. For this, he must have the complete cooperation of his wife. Absence of harmony between husband and wife may act as a deterent to the would-be guests. A person who eats his food with self-satisfaction leaving his hungry guests outside his door, will be failing in his elementary duty as a householder. In a well-ordered home-life, a good householder is expected to share his food with the deserving and needy person.

A householder who thus welcomes the needy and satisfies them, need not worry himself about his land and agriculture. The produce from his agricultural land will be plentiful and his home-life will be prosperus as a result of his kindness and generosity shown to guests.

As mentioned before, the five vows or pancha vratas are not killing, not speaking untruth, not stealing, maintaining sexual purity, and curbing avarice by putting a limit to one's possessions. These are called ahimsa, satya, astheya, brahmacharya and parimita parigraha. These five ethical principles, when applied to the ascetics, are to be observed without any limitation. Hence these are called maha Vratas, when applied to the yatis, whereas they are called anuvritas, when applied to the householder. These ethical principles are described by our author very elaborately. Since these are common to the householder and the ascetic, the author devotes a chapter to each of these, intending that this should be applied to both cases. In arranging these chapters it is found that most of these principles are brought under the head of the ascetics and their life. Thought they are so arranged, it should not be understood that they are peculiar to the saints who have completely renounced everything. Hence we have to take it as properly applicable to the householder. Hence it is proper that these are discussed when dealing with the ethics of the householder.

Speaking about avoiding meat-eating, the author emphasises the fact that it is quite incompatible in principle with universal love. How can a man show mercy and kindness to animals, he exclaims, if he kills and eats the flesh of those animals, for the purpose of sustaining his own flesh. The Buddhist who accepts the principles of ahimsa, but does not give up meat-eating, justifies his conduct by saying that he does not kill but only purchases meat from a butcher. This excuse of the Buddhist is rejected by our author who points out that it is the meat-eater who creates a demand for the butcher's trade. If the meat-eater does not purchase meat from the butcher, whose intention is merely to make money will take to some other profession. Hence the responsibility rests

upon the meat-eater who creates the demand. Similarly in the very same chapter the author condemns the Vedic yagna involving animal sacrifice. He emphasises that it is far better not to kill a single animal for food. than performing a thousand yagnas according to the Vedic rites. According to Vedic dharma a person who performs one thousand yagnas will be born as Indra, enjoying the pleasures of swarga. Even this status of Indra in swarga is not as good as avoiding meat obtained by slaughtering an animal. After condemning the attitude of the Vedice ethics as well as Buddhist ethics, the author points out the role of the spiritual greatness of abstaining from meat by saying that he who does not kill and who does not eat meat will be worshipped by the whole wold.

In the cahpter on 'Not killing' the author clearly points out that conduct according to dharma is not to kill any living being because killing an animal will bring in its strain all the possible evils. He who avoids shedding the blood of an animal must be considered more than the ascetic who recounces all his possessions. It you are placed in a critical situation while your whole life is in danger, it is far better to lose your life than to kill another living being. Dr. Pope's note under this couplet is as follows:- 'A man may not kill even in self-defence. The reasoning in Bhagavat Gita-chapter two-is averse to this.' Animal sacrifices enjoined by the Vedas are performed to appease the Vedic deities. Even though great wealth and happiness are promised as a result of this sacrific, wise men will never think of killing an animal, even in the name of religion. Those that indulge in slaughtering living beings on any account must be considered despicable Chandalas. Pope's note under this couplet is that the sacrificing priest and soldiers are not to be honoured. Thus the author points out in unmistakable terms that killing is the worst type of evil conduct, whereas abstaining from killing, is the best type of noble conduct.

The chapter on 'No to Cause any Injury to Living Beings' also forms a part of this ahimsa dharma. Causing pain to other living beings will also be a violation of this non-violence. Persons whose aim is to walk the path of righteousness will never think of

causing injury to others even though they may achieve greatness and wealth by that method. Even in the case of a person who, out of ignorance, causes injury to other living beings, still if he cares for his spotless character, he should not return evil for evil. According to our author the best method of punishing one who has done evil to you is to make him ashamed of his conduct by returning good for his evil. Even in thought you should not entertain the idea of causing injury to others. If you cause pain to any living being in the morning, its results will appear on the very same evening, by wbich you have to sufer a similar pain.

In the chapter on 'Truth' the author defines truth as that which does not cause any pain to anybody else. Further, he explains this idea that even falsehood if it produces good to others, become truth, Even in thought one should not desire to make untrue statements. If truth is maintained in thought and word he would really be greater than an ascetic who is engaged in tapas. It is truth that cleaneses the heart, just as water cleanses the body.

In the chapter on 'Not Stealing', the author condemns stealing because a person who is addicted to theft will be despised by society at large and be punished by the State according to law. Further, it would result in the spiritual degradation of the individual. Even the thought of stealing another man's property is as bad as actually stealing. Even though society 'and the State cannot take his thought of stealing as sufficient ground for punishment, still the thought punishes the man sufficiently by bringing about moral fall in the individual.

In the chapter on 'Not to Covet another Man's Wife', the author interprets the principle of brahmacharya as applicable to the householder. The householder is expected to maintain the householder's dharma while living a strict monogamous life. To give up this principle and run after another man's wife, will result in disgrace. The strict sexual purity or celibacy prescribed for the ascetic is relaxed in the case of the householder, who is

expected to live faithfully and loyally with his own wife. It is the monogamous life that will contribute to his domestic happiness and purity.

In the chapter on 'Not to be Avaricious' the author delas with the fifth vow of the householder who voluntarily puts a limit to his wealth and possessions. Without putting such a limit to his income from land or trade, he will become slave to an inordinate desire to have more and more wealth. What will happen then? Certainly, this will destroy his ideal of universal love. Such a desire will block his path to righteousness. Hence, it is necessary for the householder who adopts the ideal of universal love as his goal in life to certainly avoid this avarice for wealth. It would be a stumbling block in his path.

Then let us see what the author has said about some special characteristics of the ascetic. An ascetic is one who recounces his home life and vows to perform tapas or yoga. What is tapas? It is just this: to patiently suffer the pain that happens to you and to scrupulously avoid causing pain to others. This short definition of tapas contains the essence of spiritual discipline. From the environment, there may come to you pain which you have to suffer. When you are engaged in yogic dhyana, you are completely isolated and detached from your bodily changes. Hence, these changes, however painful they may be, will not be felt by the yogi who remains undisturbed and peaceful. It is not necessary to point out that a person so engaged in tapas will never cause injury to other beings even in thought. Just as gold becomes pure and brilliant the more it is treated with fire, his soul which is subjected to the constant fire of suffering will become brilliant, shining in its intrinsic purity. Hence, the author concludes that he who is engaged in tapas is really engaged in achieving his own goal. All others who are guided by desire will pursue the path of worldly pleasure. Him who has realised his self to perfection, the whole world will worship.

Then the author condemns the false ascetic who puts on the outward garb of an ascetic without achieving spiritual purity.

He compares such a false ascetic to an ox which puts on the skin of a tiger before entering into the field for grazing. The personal appearance of an ascetic who is engaged in tapas is irrelevant. He may appear clean shaven like a Buddhist bhikshu or he may have a long jata like a Sanyasi of the Vedic School. But this appearance will not make him a true saint when his inner self is not purified. Hence, it is pointed out that true renunciation must not stop with detachment from external things. Things living and non-living which you are accutomed to call you own, must all be set aside as utterly irrelevant to your spiritual life. Such ties to external things must be completely snapped in order to obtain undisturbed spiritual peace. Not merely the external things which constitute your wealth, ought to be cast away, but even the body of the Yogi will be felt by him as an unnecessary encumbrance. Such a complete renunciation is an inevitable condition for achieving life's goal and thus to avoid rebirth into samsara. In order to completely liberate oneself of all the ties to the external world, you have to surrender yourself to the Lord who has achieved such a liberation by destroying all attachment.

In the chapter on 'True knowledge of Reality' the author describes the three jewels of right belief, right knowledge, and right conduct, which together constitute the path of salvation, Being born as a man with the useful five organs of senses and also the mind, will be worthless if he does not understand and appreciate these three elements of moksha marga. He who has a spotless belief as to the nature of reality will have his life in the world quite happy. Free from doubt, equipped with staunch belief, he must understand the nature of reality. Such an understanding constitutes right knowledge. A man equipped with true faith and true knowledge will try to purify his soul from such defects as desire, anger and delusion. When he rids himself of such defects, he will be able to achieve right conduct.

Thus, stating the path of salvation, the author emphasises that desire is the seed of samsara. To transcend samsara, this seed must be destroyed. When the self reaches that stage, where there is no rebirth, it may be said to have realised its true nature which is marked by spiritual perfection. This, in short, is the author's account of dharma. It will be seen to be naturally

different from the Vedic dharma formulated by Manu and further elaborated by the law-givers of the Vedic school.

The second book deals with the nature and function of the State. The component parts of the State and the qualifications of each, form the subject matter of the second book. It is, in general terms, called wealth. Here also the plan adopted by the author is very different from the views expressed in the Hindu Dharma Sastras. The ruler, according to the Hindu Sastras, is always assumed to be a representative of the divinity. The organisation of the State is also based upon the characteristic varnashrama dharma. The ruler, as a representative of divinity. on earth, is assumed to be the second varna, Kshatriya. The priests claimed to be of the highest Varna. About the period of the Upanishads, this claim was challenged by the ruling kings, who claimed the higher social status for themselves. But in the later period of Indian history, this challenge was liquidated. The varnashrama dharma structure of society was established in its traditional form. According to this, the priests remained the custodians of Vedic culture. The kshatriyas supplied the fighting force to the State. The Vysyas formed the financial backbone of the State. Men belonging to the fourth varna were engaged in agriculture. The state organisation based on the caste system had its peculiar characteristic legal tradition. Civil rights of the citizens, the institution of property, the method of inheritance, in short all the legal system relating to the civil rights and privileges were formulated in such a way that each varna in the State had its own characteristic civil rights and privileges. Similarly, in the case of criminal law administration, the varnashrama dharma structure of society had its inevitable influence on the administration of criminal law. The definition of crime varied according to the varna of the accused. The nature and immensity of the crime committed by an individual would naturally undergo change and modification accoding to the caste to which the accused belonged. Obviously, therefore, the punishment meted out to the accused would also undergo a

change corresponding to the caste of the accused. The varnashrama dharma was such a dominant factor in the administration of law and justice. But such a system will be a misfit, and anomolous in the modern world. Though the Hindu law relating to the rights and privileges of the individual has remained unchanged for several centuries, the criminal law administration based upon the old varnas was luckily scrapped by the foreign administration who ruled the country for several centuries. The Britisher, who were the rulers of the land till recently, drafted the Indian Penal code after the model of the British system. This penal code did not recognise any difference between man and man in the eyes of law. Law and justice were established in an impartial manner. The administration did not recognise any difference based on the birth of the individual. This fearless and impartial administration of justice must be considered as the noblest contribution of the British administration in shaping the judicial system of modern India.

The author of TIRUKKURAL seems to have adopted a similar attitude even two thousand years ago. He did not recognise the legal system, either civil or ciriminal, based upon caste distinction. In this respect also, it is distinctly in conflict with the ancient Hindu ideal of law and justice. He begins the book by describing certain essential characteristics of the ruler. The main conception of a ruler is that he must be generous and impartial towards his people. He must always help the needy and protect the weak among his subjects. He must scrupulously maintain law and order which must be administered on an ethical basis. To maintain such administration on a moral basis, attention must also be paid to education. The ruler himself must be fully educated and he must spread education amongst his people. Every individual in the State must have opportunity for culture. Learning should not be considered as the monopoly of a particular group. Every individual in the State, irrespective of

birth, must be given the opportunity to acquire education. Without cultural development, the individual citizen would lead merely an animal life. Hence, according to him, culture is the real wealth which must be acquired by an individual. This wealth when once acquired will not be lost by him.

Next he condemns illiteracy among the people. An illiterate man who has not availed himself of the benefit of education and learning, will not be far different from an ordinary animal. Hence, in a State there should be no one who is illiterate. The author does not define culture merely in terms of literacy-the ability to read and write. Culture may be acquired by merely listening to the discourses of the wise. After describing the various methods of acquiring culture, the author next describes the importance of wisdom. Real knowledge, the foundation of wisdom, consists in carefully examining every statement heard from different persons and accepting those that are based on reason. The wise man who has such knowledge based on reason, much be said to possess everything in the world. But a man lacking in this, however great his wordly possessions, will be considered a bankrupt in the world.

The ruler must obtain the frienship of the wise who always walk in the right path. Such a friendship will be of great benefit to the ruler. He will find such a friendship more powerful to the State than all the processes of defence. The ruler who has the friendship of such wise men, who will point out his defects without fear, need not be afraid of any enemy force. Exactly contrary to this is his frienship with the undersirable and the low. The worth of a person can easily be estimated by knowing his associates. Good friends will be a source of strength, whereas evil associates will be a dangerous encumbrance.

Then the author has a number of chapters dealing with the military strength of the State. the qualitifications of the ministers, the importance and loyalty of the military officers, and such

matters relating to the efficiency of the State organisation. In describing all these, he never forgets to point out that the ruler as well as his officers-civil and military-should maintain their character and integrity in discharging their duties. They should avoid intoxicating drinks. They should never associate with women of doubtful character. Failure to maintain one's integrity against the influence of drink and women, will not only lead to their personal ruin but will also bring the State into disrepute. But the most important point that we have to notice in our author's idea of economics is the place he assigns to agriculture. Quite contrary to the established Hindu dharma, which assigns to agriculture the last place in social economy, our author places agriculture at the top. According to him, the profession of agriculture is the noblest. The producer of food is given the top rank in society. Even the priests and soldiers have to wait at his door for food. Hence, he considers agriculture as the foundation of social stability. Since agriculture is the real basis for prosperity and plenty in the State, the State should promote this profession of producing food so that it may contribute to the general prosperity and welfare of the State. People even in alien lands must consider it a great privilege to become citizens of such a State. The State by its healthy administration, should not only promote the contentment and happiness of its citizens, but also stand as a welcome invitation for foreigners. In such a welfare State there should be no place for poverty and misery. If every one realises that prosperity-both individual and social-depends upon the effort of everyone then there will be no one in such a State who will be in want. Poverty and misery in an individual bring inevitable results in his own lack of effort and incurable laziness. If every citizen determine, to be alert, work and earn, there is no danger of anyone being in want. An indolent man who does not earn his sustenance by his own effort and who remains indolent, will become a laughing stock in society. Even the land which produces food for all will ridicule him because

he remains in the clutches of poverty, in spite of his individual ability to make an effort and earn for himself. Such is the conception of social organisation which will not give room to indolence and poverty. Poverty is a thing to be ashamed of in any well-organised society. This idea of collecting the individual effort and economic/stability. of the whole, is further strengthened by the author's conception as to how an individual should set apart a very large portion of his income for the benefit of all. Such a life would guarantee the equitable distribution of wealth in a society. There will be no undersirable accumulation of wealth in one part of society. nor an unbearable accumulation of misery and wretchedness in another part. Such an equitable distribution of wealth and a successful elimination of poverty and misery will be the main characteristics of a welfare State. It will not have to face the conflict between capitalism and communism, which is the characteristic struggle in the modern world. A proper appreciation of the author's ideal of a welfare State will bring a necessary remedy to a number of the social and economic evils of which the present world is suffering.

Here, we have to notice the author's attitutde towards begging. Though he approves of begging in the case of those who have chosen the path of poverty, by renouncing all their posessions with the sole object of rendering cultural service to the society, he condemns in no unmistakable terms begging as a profession. Able-bodied beggars who live by begging are an ignoble curse to society. If such beggary acquires further religious justification, on the grounds that beggars were so ordered by the Creator, it is an intolerable state, according to our author. He cries out in moral horror 'woe be to that Creator that sustains such beggars by accommodating them in the world! In this also, the author's attitude is in open conflict with the general Vedic culture, which recognises begging as the privilege of a few, and the denial of gifts to them as a heinous sin. The author evidently

would not brook such things. Man must work to live. He who does not want to work but wants to lead any easy life by begging, should have no place in a well-ordered State. It need not be pointed out that the author's idea of the economic structure of society, though two thousand years old, appears to be quite modern and sound in its conception. Persons planning the future welfare State must necessarily understand and appreciate this principle. It was clearly enunciated two thousand years ago by a champion of the Tamil culture. It will be useful not only for the planning of a welfare State in our country, but it will serve as a useful remedy to the economic struggle in which the world as a whole is now engaged.

The third book deals with love. Love is the basis of family happiness. Here also, we have to notice that the treatment adopted by the author is quite different from what is called Kama sastra in the other school of thought. Vatsayana's Kamasutras may be taken as the type of kama sastra. It frankly deals with sex matters. It first delas with various methods of stimulating sex feeling. Then it goes to describe the various modes of the sex act. If the book is published with illustrations elucidating the sex act, it will be considered as an obscene publication, and probably criminal action will be taken against the publishers. And yet, the Kamasutras are translated into various European languages. The third book of TIRUKKURAL was mistakenly assumed to be the counterpart of the kamasutra. We have to emphatically point out that this has nothing to do with kama sastra. The topics dealt with here are quite different. The book describes the development of love between two young persons of different sex, who mutually agree to live together by setting up a home for themselves. The book is divided into two parts. The first part deals with courtship. A young man accidentally meets a beautiful maid. This accidental meeting results in their love for each other. This accidental first meeting of the couple

takes place without the knowledge of their parents. This secret meeting is repeated several rimes - all the while the parents being ignorant of the situation. The meeting is therefore clandestine. During these clandestine meetings, the couple understand each other and make up their minds to live together as husband and wife. This is the topic of the first section of the book.

The second section deals with the regular wedding. The clandestine meeting of the couple becomes an open talk in the locality. The parents of the girl are also informed of this. No amount of public scandal nor parents' pressure can bring about a separation between the couple. Finally, it is decided to express the general approval of the alliance by the parents as well as the public at large, by celebrating publicly the ceremonial ritual of marriage. As the author of THOLKAPPIAM points out,. this ceremonial marriage was a later institution. Originally two persons attracted by mutual love, carefully studied the nature and character of each till they agreed to live together as husband and wife, the only bondage between the two being the bondage of love. But later on, it was found that this system did not work well. Jealousy and treachery began to undermine their pure love. The female partner was very often deserted by her friend. In order to prevent such catastrophe, ritual marriage expressing the general social approval as well as the imposing of certain sanction against breach of contract was introduced. That seems to be the origin of the mariage system, according to the author of THOLKAPPIAM.

The second part of the third book of TIRUKKURAL deals with the domestic life of the married couple. With the approval of the parents, the couple set up a home of their own and enjoy their domestic happiness. But the husband may have to leave his wife for some time. He may be an officer of the State, either in the army or civil administration. In such a capacity, he may have to go to a foreign country and stay there for a considerable

period of time. Even as a private individual, he may have to go to foreign countries for commercial reasons. whatever be the motive of their separation, their separation is felt bitterly by each. The wife is left alone at home. Every day, she feels the absence of her husband. The longer the period of separation, the more unbearable becomes the agony of loneliness. The husband, attending to his State duty in a distant country, is not altogether free from such an experience. He also feels the worry of loneliness. He eagerly waits for the day when he can return home. All the various phases of the psychological experience of their separation, though temporary, are painted very skilfully by the author in this section. Not merely the variations in the stormy emotion of love due to separation, but also the various bodily changes brought about by such psychological experience, are all beautifully painted in words by the author. And yet, the Indian commentators, having confused this with the topic of kamasutras, have spoilt the whole thing ; thus creating an entirely unhealthy psychological atmosphere for this part of the book.

European scholars who imbibed such prejudices from the Indian commentators, developed an unjustifiable prejudice against the third book of TIRUKKURAL. The credit for taking a reasonable attitude must be given to colonel Ellis. He was able to see the purity of atmosphere prevalent in the whole section of domestic happiness. Then, the bold step of translating this third book was also taken up the German Missionary, Graul, Lastly, Dr. Pope, courageously enters into the field and translates the whole book. A reader will be able to realise the noble and healthy atmosphere created by the author in describing the general characteristics of domestic happiness based on pure love.

In summing up our study of the book, we have once again to draw the attention of the reader to the fact that it represents the essence of Tamil culture prevalent in the early century of the Christian era. It is a noble attempt to safeguard the culture

of the Tamils at a time when unwelcome inroads were being made by an alien culture, antagonistic to the principle of non-violence, and militantly propagating its own social organisation based upon varnashrama dharma. The Tamil culture portrayed in TIRUKKURAL jealously guarded these two principles-the non-violent dharma, as the basis of life, and the casteles society, as the foundation of the socio-economic structure. This Tamil culture had been maintaining its integrity and purity for some centuries. But Sambanda, the leader of the Thevaram, introduced the millitant form of Kapalika religion, whose onslaught was too much for the defenders of ahimsa culture to bear. He secured the cooperation of some members of the royal household of the Pandyan kingdom through which he brought about the conversion of the king himself. Thereafter, the path was clear. Saints of non-violent faith were massacred mercilessly, and a militant form of the culture of Rudra-Siva of the Kapalikas was enforced on the Tamil population. The old non-violent cult, the religion of the Tamils, was completely brushed aside without any trace, and society was reconstructed strictly on the basis of the caste. This reformation, brought about in the beginning of 8th century A.D., still continues to be the religion of the social organisation of the Tamil land up to the present. Whether the reformation has introduced a higher form of religion and a better form of economic structure of society, it is for the reader to judge.

Tirukkural
Madras : Diocesan Press, 1953,
PP. iii and iv; li to lx vii

9

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR

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Political theory, Sabine writes, has always been a part of philosophy ; it is a reflection upon morals, economics, government, religion and law. Bosanquet says that political life of man has a nature of its own, which is worthy of investigation on its own merits and for its own sake. Bertrand Russel points out that philosophers are both effects and causes : effects of their social circumstances and of the polities and institutions of their time ; causes (if they are fortunate) of beliefs which mould the polities and institutions of later ages. Cook holds the view that the political philosopher desires to transcend the environment as well as to remove the defects of political organisation. Coker remarks that political philosophy is not abstract speculation but it is practical reflection concerning our expectations from political action. Tiruvalluvar, the Tamil sage of yore, writes as though he had been conversant with all these views of our contemporary political writers.

Political philosophy deals with many a problem of perennial interest to the ruler as well as the ruled. The purpose and end of the state, the problem of human values, the basis of sovereignty, the scope of authority, the rights to freedom and revolt, the

question of property, the justification for waging war and the necessity for a good foreign policy are some of the problems discussed today. Few of these vital problems escape the eyes of Tiruvalluvar. Further, he is fully aware of the fact that the problem of any government is the basic question of organisation of man as a social animal for the good life, however differently that life may be interpreted in different periods of history.

Tiruvalluvar is said to have lived about 2,000 years ago. His is the immortal Tamil work, Tirukkural. It has been translated into various languages. Among them Father Beschi's translation into Latin, Graul's into German, Ariel's into French and the English translations of Pope, Drew, Lazarus, V. V. S. Ayyar[1] and Rajaji are the very familiar ones. There are also many commentaries in Tamil on the Kural. Recently an anthology of five of these commentaries (by Parimelalakar, Manakkudavar; Parithiperumal, Parithiyar and Kalingar) has been published by a learned Tamil scholar S. Dandhapani Desikar by name. This work has been acclaimed the greatest Tamil publication of the 20th century, by Prof. T.P. Meenakshisundaran.

The entire book of Tiruvalluvar is usually divided into three parts-aram,[2] porul and inbam. These correspond to dharma, artha and kama. Out of these three the second part is a treatise on political philosophy and practice as well as on political economy. It is addressed to a prince or ruler. Regarding this second division of Tirukkural V.V.S. Ayyar writes that " The fact that this part is about twice the size of the first and thrice that of third shows what importance the sage gives to polities in his scheme of life."[3] This part consists of 700 couplets. All these are further classified into three units,[4] the first of which deals with the prince, the second with members of the body politic and the third discusses miscellaneous subjects.

Though the second book of Tirukkural discusses the statesman's art, the following are some of Tiruvalluvar's ideas which are equally applicable to the statesman and the layman as

well : One must not only learn with precision but also should translate into practice what has been learnt (391). Letters and Numbers are the two eyes of human life (392). The words of the good are like a staff in the slippery place (415). True knowledge consists in the capacity to discriminate the true from the false in every utterance, no matter who makes it (423). Those who have foresight will not be bowled over by calamity (429). It is ten times more foolishness to abandon the friendship of the good than to invite the hatred of the many (450). Purity of heart and action result when one is in association with chaste company (455). Even though the income is limited it will not be bad if the expenditure is not large (478). A man's deeds are the touch-stone of his greatness and littleness (505). Self-complacency is a greater danger than excessive rage (531). They who are able to show kindness and consideration without adversely interfering with their duties will inherit the world (578). Those who love procrastination, forgetfulness, idleness and sleep are bound to perish (605). The proud pleasure of being able to serve others belongs to any one who is ready to exert (613). Since prosperity and ruin are caused by the words of one's mouth one should guard one's tongue (642). Even if one is mentally as sharp as a file, if one is devoid of culture fitting a human being one is comparable only to a piece of wood (997). Besides these stray pieces the whole of certain chapters such as the ones on greatness (ch. 98), worth (ch. 99) and culture (ch. 100) are equally applicable to the politicians and the public.

Tiruvalluvar's political philosophy has morality for its background. Tiruvalluvar is moral to the core. He is essentially a moralist and makes morality the basis of all aspects of life including politics, economics and private family life. In this he resembles Ruskin, Carlyle and Gandhiji. He never compromises the means on the ground that the end justifies the means. Even a cursory perusal of his 99th chapter, which deals with goodness, will justify this opinion. The same spirit is reflected in his political philosophy. He writes for instance that "The prince shall not fail in virtue and shall abolish unrighteousness: he shall guard his honour jealously but shall not sin against the laws of valour" (384). In short it can be said that the basic principle of

Valluvar's political philosophy is that all men are born equal and that virtue is universal; politics and economics should not be cut off from ethics.

Like most other Indian writers on the science of politics, he divides the members of the body politic into six in the very first stanza of the Porul adhikaram. They are fighting forces, population, wealth, ministers, allies and fortresses (381). Exclusive chapters are devoted to each one of these and the treatment reveals Valluvar's political acumen and precision.

Chapter 39 deals with the qualifications of the prince. He is said to have the fighting forces, subjects, riches, ministers, friends and fortifications mentioned just above. He is the custodian of virtues such as courage, liberality, intelligence, industry (382), alertness, learning, bravado and quickness of decision (383). He should be able to develop the resources, to preserve and to spend it worthily (385).[5] He should be easily accessible and should be devoid of harsh words (387). He should give with affability, and rule with love (387). He should have beneficence, benevolence and rectitude, and should take loving care of his people. In chapter 44 it is said that avarice, the undignified pride and low pleasures are faults in a prince (432). If he corrects his own faults and then corrects those of others he will not be blame-worthy (436). In chapter 45 it is pointed out that the king should choose his courtiers with due discretion as they serve as his eyes (445). The ruler will ruin himself if he has no one to reprove him when he goes wrong (448). In chapter 47 it is indicated that to wage a war without careful preplanning will amount to transplanting the enemy on carefully prepared soil beneficial to him only (465). It is further stated in chapter 48 before actual warfare one should take stock of the difficulties to be surmounted, one's own strength, that of the enemy, and that of the allies (471). Again it is pointed out that the wheel of a bandy even though it be loaded only with peacock's feathers will give in, due to overload (475). By this analogy Tiruvalluvar hints that "even the most powerful king will succumb if he makes war with too many enemies at a time, even if each of them should be despicable when alone".

In chapter 49 the prince is advised to do the right thing at the right moment. A crow, it is pointed out, will overcome an owl in the day ; so also the king who would conquer his enemy must have an opportune moment. (481). In chapter 50 the prince is advised not to provoke an operation without proper reconnaissance (491). Chapters 51 and 52 deal with the principles to be applied in choosing ministers and other servants. The king is advised to supervise them daily (520). Chapter 53 deals with the mode of moving with one's relatives. They should not be treated alike but according to their merits (528). In chapter 55 the king is enjoined to rule with love. For sovereignty will not depart from the king who rules with love (544). However, Tiruvalluvar sanctions punitive measures for wrong doers. He makes it the duty of a king to punish (549). Capital punishment, according to him, is necessary for purging out the weeds of society (550). But he advocates the deterrent theory of punishment. Moreover punishment should fit the crime and the criminal (561). He further adds if the government is to last long the rod should be brandished smartly but should be laid softly (562).

Tiruvalluvar devotes chapter 56 to tyranny. Tiruvalluvar, like St. Augustine, equates unjust government to a highway robbery (551 and 552). Like the Bible, Tirukkural says the tears of the oppressed form the weapon which will unseat the tyrant. Tiruvalluvar opines that the earth bears up no greater burden than a cruel sceptre which attaches to itself ignorant men (570). However, Valluvar does not give to the suppressed any right to tyrannicide as does John of Salisbury or Mariana. Nor does he suggest to the downtrodden to rise in revolt. Nor does he want any leader to rise "to be a dangerous salt or a dangerous leaven" on this account. He thinks the rule of the tyrant will automatically wither away (554, 563, 564, & 566).

Tiruvalluvar sees the necessity for a secret intelligence statement for successful government. Chapter 59 deals with this topic. He wants spies to go about in the guise of ascetics (586).

He advises the prince that he should see that members of the C.I.D. should not know one another (589) and advises the ruler not to honour them in public (590). He further asks the prince to take action only when there is corroboration in the accounts given by the agents. At least three reports should agree, says Valluvar, for the ruler to give credence to them (589). This passage is one of those pieces which give the lie direct to the statement that Tiruvalluvar is a vague generaliser and the thoughts of the Tamils are sterile abstractions.[6]

The qualities of the minister are described in chapter 64. He should be a good judge of ways, means, time and manner of doing things (631). He should possess firmness, loving kindness toward people, clear learning and perseverance (632). He should be able to play the political game of dissolving allies, forming allies and uniting enemies (633). He should be ready to offer opinions (634). He should combine in himself book learning and practical experience (637).

Chapter 60 deals with the qualities of the ambassador. These consist of loving nature, high birth, pleasing manners (681), loyalty, discriminating capacity (682), scholarship, attractive bearing (683 and 684), sweetness of tongue, capacity to eschew disagreeable words (685), timeliness (687), firm mindedness, purity of heart (688), and fearlessness of death (690). Chapter 70 discusses the qualities that are becoming for the Courtiers such as keeping neither too near nor too far off from the prince (691), not arousing suspicion (693) and avoiding inquisitiveness (695).

Chapters 72 and 73 give suggestions regarding platform manners and audiences. The question what is a real kingdom is analysed in chapter 74. Chapter 75 deals with the details of fortresses. Chapter 76 extols the importance of wealth. Chapters 77 and 78 enumerate the characteristics of a good army. Chapters 79 to 83 form a section by themselves. Herein the problem of friendship is thrashed out. Chapters 87 to 89 form yet another unit devoted to enemies, internal and external. In chapter 91

those who run the government are warned against falling a prey to the petticoat government. When one goes through this chapter one is reminded of the Czar Nicholas III who was ruled by his wife which ultimately led to the Communist revolution. Chapters 92, 93, 94 and 95 give a warning against women, wine, gambling and over eating.

Thus we find that Tiruvalluvar does not write on an ideal state like Plato, Augustine and More but writes like Aristotle on the ideals of the state. He speaks about the physical and mental conditions required for good life. He outlines both political ideals and political practice. But he never suggests that expediency should be the consideration in matters political. His views regarding the qualities of the ruler, law, political and economic life are clear cut just as his specifications regarding the national army, fortresses and agricultural operations.

Tiruvalluvar's concepts of education are both edifying and practical. Chapters 40 to 43 deal with learning. In the opinion of Valluvar learning is the only imperishable wealth (400). Knowledge is comparable to a sand-spring (396). The learning of one birth will be of avail for seven births (398). "As beasts by the side of men, so are other men by the side of those who are learned in celebrated works" (410). Out of several ways of instruction Valluvar prefers learning by hearing. This method is more personal than the other ones and is also highly suitable for adult education. Valluvar exclaims, "Behold the men who have listened to much instruction: they are very gods on earth" (413). Even the unlettered man will be benefited at the time of distress if he has acquired learning by hearing (414). True understanding is the capacity to discriminate the right from the wrongs and the true from the false (423).

Regarding family, Tiruvalluvar says that the pure family life is preferable to that of the life of a brahmachari. He cautions that those who want to establish an illustrious family should abstain from sloth (602). If haziness takes up its abode in a family,

the family will soon be in bondage to its foes (608). Chapter 96 gives a vivid description of a typical noble family and details regarding the demeanour of the members of such a family. Chapter 103 tack les the problem of rearing a family. Manual labour and perseverance are pointed out to be the secrets of success here.

Tiruvalluvar is not against private property. The rich should hold their wealth as mere trustees and make it useful for others. Tiruvalluvar compares the wealth in the hands of the intelligent capitalist to the lake full of water in the midst of the town (215). He further points out that whether any piece of property will turn out real wealth or illth depends upon the mind and culture of its owner (1,000).

In chapter 101 Tiruvalluvar preaches his doctrines of socialism. He refers here in detail both to miserliness and the wealth that is not put to good use. The treatment of the subject is characteristic of Tiruvalluvar, the moral and social philosopher. The man who has hoarded riches and does not use it for his own benefit is a dead man (1001), and if he does not share it with others he is a demon (1002). Such a one will go to his grave unhonoured, unwept and unsung. Positively his existence is a burden to the earth (1003). He is comparable to the damsel who wastes her youth in loneliness (1007. His prosperity is poison in the midst of the town. (1008). But "the distress of the man of wealth who hath emptied his resources by benefactions is only like the exhaustion of the rain cloud: it will not continue for long" (1010). When one studies these pieces one is reminded of Bradley's exhortations to live as an infinite whole.

The subsequent chapter 102 on the sensitivity to shame clearly points out that Tiruvalluvar is not a materialist as the modern Marxist. Further while the modern schools of socialism extol the various industries, Tiruvalluvar makes agriculture the main stay of the world (104). He vividly pictures the misery that is caused by poverty (ch. 105). He points out that even one's own

mother will disown one if one suffers from abject penury (1047). Poverty is worse than consuming fire; one can even sleep while surrounded by flames but sleep will completely desert one in penury (1049). Further Valluvar preaches liberality in chapter 106 and brings out the evils of begging in the next chapter. Finally he cautions people to have some scruples and breadth of vision in judging others for it is the vile man who always discovers vices in a neighbour well clothed and well fed (1079).

While Plato's communism is political, Apostolic communism in spiritual, Fransciscan communism is based on poverty, the communism is based on economic consideration, that of Tiruvalluvar is ethical. Using the terminology of Harrington, the 17th century political thinker, it can be said Tiruvalluvar stood for "ancient prudence" or the art of governing by law for the common good, and Marxian communism is "Modern prudence" which consists of exploiting the community in the interest of an individual or a class.

Tiruvalluvar shows also the relationship between the Two Swords, the sacerdotium and the imperium. In the 55th chapter, which deals with upright government he says::

அந்தணர் நூற்கும் அறத்திற்கும் ஆதியாய்
நின்றது மன்னவன் கோல்

This means the sceptre of the king is the mainstay of the books of the Brahmans and also of rectitude (543). He makes imperium the foundation of religious and ethical life. In the next chapter he adds:

ஆபயன் குன்றும் அறுதொழிலோர் நூன்மறப்பர்
காவலன் காவா னெனின்

This means that if the ruler neglects to guard the country the produce of the cows will fall and the men of six duties (Brahmans) will forget their sacred books (560). These pieces give the lie direct to the charge laid against Indian thought that it is only other worldly.

Scholars have pointed out that "Kural combines the Confucian mundane wisdom with Taoian high thinking without the humdrumness of the one or the chronic mysticism of the other, and shares with the Republic its utopian odour to create an order, and lacks both the detailed concreteness and the smug michiavellism of the Arthsatra,"[7] It has also been argued that Valluvar is not the Plato of Tamilians, but analysed the components of a good state fully and systematically that he can be called the Tamil Aristotle.

The codification of the writings of Tiruvalluvar is attributed to Parimelalakar. One modern Tamil scholar[8] has expressed the opinion that the proper arrangement of the three books of Tirukkural is the reverse of what is given to us by Parimelalakar. Chapters on love should come first, then those on Polities and finally the rest on dharma. It is pointed out that this is not only the proper arrangement according to the genius of the Tamils, who had always made the sentiment of love the master-sentiment, but also is proved by the internal evidence. The whole of this argument turns on the 757th stanza of Tirukkural as the pivot which runs thus: Grace which is the child of Love grows under the care of the rich nurse of Wealth. On the same trend it can be argued that even the arrangement of the three sections of the porul adhikaram, which has been so far engaging our attention, may be revised. First the chapters on people (ozhipiyal), then those on the immediate officers (angaviyal) and finally the rest on the Prince (arasiyal) can be given. In that case this would make Tirukkural as the book on Republicanism. In this connection it is significant that those chapters which are held to constitute ozhipiyal are given the generic name of Kudi-iyal by Mannakkudavar and Pariperumal.

A few scholars have written in English about the political philosophy of Tiruvalluvar. Among them K.V. Rangaswamy Ayyangar, V.V.S. Ayyar, V.R.R. Dikshidar, A.C. Paul Nadar and R.R. Pakrisankar are worth mentioning here. Some traditional commentators of Tirukkural and some modern scholars suggest that Tiruvalluvar wrote mainly due to the inspiration he had from Arthsastra, Sukraneedhi and Kamandhaka. They do not however

go to the extent of saying that Tiruvalluvar copied or translated from these and other sources. There are others who hold that Tiruvalluvar never had anything to do with Sanskrit sources.[9] Still others point out that Tirukkural represents in certain definite places Dravidian culture and in certain other places Aryan culture.[10] But it can be definitely said that parallel ideas or opinions occur in many of the great books of Political philosophy; Tirukkural is one of the greatest guides to morals and politics, and what is more it is a hand book of these two together harmoniously blended.

NOTES

1 In the preparation of this paper, the translations of Drew, Lazarus and V.S. Ayyar were consulted. (D.I. Jesudoss is Lecturer in Philosophy, Annamalai University).

2. It is sometimes said that aram is justice and it should not be confused with the dharma in Sanskrit vide p.200 "Tamil Culture" (Journal).

3. Cf. preface p.32 of his translation of Tirukkural.

4. This division is according to the well - known commentator Parimelalakar. Some other scholars have divided it into six and seven sections. Vide Tirukkural oorai - valam p.7.

5. Strive save and serve - these ideals found in the 385th stanza of Tirukkural have been the guiding stars of the late lamented merchant prince, Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the founder of the Tamil seat of learning and culture at Annamalainagar. He has proclaimed this in a letter (written on 25 - 3- 1944) the facimile of which can be seen in a book entitled Tamil Peruvallal, by M. Arunachalam Pillai of the Staff of the Annamalai University.

6. Cf. "Tamil Culture", p.202.

7. Cf. "Tamil Culture", p. 196.

8. Dr.M.Varadarajan in his Tiruvalluvar or Explanation of Life (a Tamil book).

9. Some of the scholars who spoke on the 8th and 9th of November, 1952, in the Purasawalkam Kural Neri Kazhagam hold this view: Vide the Tamil Dailies of Madras of these dates.

10. Cf. "Tamil Culture", p. 116.

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10

THE TIRUKKURAL AND THE GREEK ETHICAL THOUGHT

Xavier S. Thani Nayagam

Among men of science and intellect who have commented on the Tirukkural, Dr. Albert Schweitzer is, perhaps, the best known. In his book Indian thought and its Development, while discoursing on the ethical characteristics of schools of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism and their emphasis on life- negation and word- negation, he says that there is proof that in India an optimistic world - view and life - view existed and that the maxims of the Kural, which are so different in spirit from Manu and the Bhagavatgita, offer convincing proof of the prevalence of that spirit in early times. And he adds: "there hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find such lofty wisdom". In order to measure the worth of the remarks of Doctor Schweitzer, one should have read his many works and known how, in his maturity, he has devoted a great many years to writing on the subject of ethics. His second volume of the **Philosophy of Civilization** is entitled **Civilization and Ethics**, and here he traces the history of ethics and shows the importance of a practical living ethic for the happiness of mankind. Tribute from such a great thinker on the ethical distinctiveness of the Kural deserves to draw the attention

of the world to this great work in world literature. Dr. Albert Schweitzer knew of the Kural from the German translation of Graul. He might have been even more exact and more generous in his appraisal of the Kural as an ethical work, had he studied it in the original,

similarly, western scholars who have had access to the Kural in translation, or in the original, have naturally compared its maxims with the ethical and religious books of Europe, with which they were familiar. The earliest record of a non- Indian use of this classic is to be found in Fernao de Queyroz's Conquest of Ceylon, in which the Franciscan missionary, Fra Joam de Villa Conde, in religious debate at the court of Bhuvanaika Bahu of Kotte, Ceylon, (1521 - 1551), cited the Tirukkural in support of the doctrines which he preaches: "Read one of the books you have, which you have maliciously hidden, composed by Valuer, a native of Melipur and a contemporary of St. Thomas. There you will find the union of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son, the Redemption of man, the cause of his fall, the remedy for his faults and miseries, and finally the preservation of his state".

Joam de Villa Conde was a missionary quite familiar with Ceylon and South India. This passage is evidence that the Kural was sufficiently popular as to attract notice of the Portuguese. Incidentally, it is also evidence of the use of Tamil at the Sinhalese Court of Kotte. The Italian literary genius and Jesuit missionary, Guisspe Costanzio Beschi (d.1742), who translated the major portion of this work into Latin with a commentary, compared it very justly with the maxims of Seneca. M. Ariel, the French scholar, to whom the Kural came as a great surprise, called it " one of the highest and purest expressions of human thought", Addressing as Tiruvalluvar does "the whole community of mankind" (journal Asiatique Nov - Dec, 1848). In 1889, G. Brique de Fointaineam published a French translation of the Kamathupal. Julien Vinson, in his preface to the translation,

states that in 1761 a complete French translation of the Kural made by a native of Karikal, was deposited in the Royal (now National) Library by a Colonel of the French Army, but no trace has been found of this manuscript. Dr. G.U. Pope in his introduction to the English translation, compares the metre and poetry of Tirukkural to the Greek epigrams, to Martial, the Latin elegiac verse and the happiest efforts of Propertius. He is full of wonder and admiration, regarding the subject matter of the Tirukkural, "Their resemblance to the gnomic poetry of Greece is remarkable as not their subjects, their sentiments and the state of society when they were uttered" he says, and compares the Kural's epigrammatic style to that of St. Augustine. He hails the author as the Tamil magister sententiarum, a name given in another context to Peter Lombardy, the great scholastic precursor of Thomas Aquinas. In the notes to his translations, Dr. Pope quotes parallel passages and thoughts from such varied authors as the Bagavatgita, Horace, Aeschyles, Dante, Tennyson, Shakespeare, Ecclesiasticus, St. Matthew, St. John, Browning, Keble, Wordsworth, Mane, Terence, Ovid, St. Luke, St. Paul, Aristotle's "Ethics", Matthew Arnold, Damma-pada, Oldenberg's Buddha, the Upanishads, Hitopedesa, Suetonius, Virgil, Catullus and Dionysius Cato, "whose 140 distichs are said to resemble the Kural more than anything else I have found." If Dr. Pope had the time and space, he could have given us a whole series of parallel passages form the Bible, from the Greek and Latin poets, and from the Chinese philosophers, in fact, from philosophers and gnomic poets all over the world.

Ethical thought in the Ancient World grows, expands and develops according to the structure of society and the phenomena of social change. It appears in its most elementary forms in Egypt, in Sumer and in Babylon, in the legal codes of Lipit - Ishtar and Hmmurabi, the first records in which rights of property and ownership are recognised and defended. Abstract notions of honour, virtue, glory, appear in the warrior ethics of the epic age of the **Illiad** and the **Odyssey**, the **Ramayanam** and the

Mahabharatha. It appears as specialized and professional thought in the discussions of philosophers, in Plato and Aristotle in Greece, in Zoroaster in Persia, in Confucius, Mencius and LaoTse in China, in the Dharmasutras and Dharmasastras (Manu, Apastamba, and Kautilya to a certain extent) in India. The geographical areas through which ethical thought may be traced in the present state of recorded history and literature, are Egypt, the Euphrate - Tigris basin (i.e. Sumeria and Asyria), the Graeco - Roman world, China, and India, and with the ethical literature of these areas the **Tirukkural** may be compared.

Early Ethics and the Tirukkural

It is to Egypt that we have to go for the first pages of recorded ethics, and this takes us back from the second to the fourth millennia before Christ. The kingdom of the Pharaohs, which arose on the banks of the Nile, was based on agriculture and commerce. Society was divided into classes at the head of which was the Pharaoh, followed by a powerful priesthood, a landed gentry, and slaves. There was a system of tenant - cultivation, and the State appropriated part of the produce as taxes. Happiness in after-life was dependent on life on earth. In this environment, elementary notions of Justice, honesty, truthfulness, loyalty grew. Most Egyptologists are, however, agreed that the Egyptians were not very highly developed in their ethical sense.

The ethical literature which developed among the Egyptians includes books of maxims and proverbs giving practical norms as how to conduct the business of life. These books which are probably the first known books of the world, were by men of affairs to instruct their sons or wards, and were subsequently used as textbooks for the education of the young. Students had to copy these text-books and hence several of these copy-book papyri have been preserved. One of these is the Instruction of Ptahhotep, a Grand Vizier, (fl. 2675 or 2870 B.C.)., who wrote down, in his old age, instructions for his son so that he might be trained as his assistant, and in course of time, his successor. Among the many aphorisms and maxims, he says:-

It is craftsman who speaks in council, and speech is more difficult than any craft.

Make righteousness flourish, and thy children shall live.

Established is the man whose standard is righteousness, who walketh according to his way.

In another book instruction for king Merikere (2300 B.C.) it is said: Truth comes to him well-brewed, after the manner of the ancestors. Imitate thy fathers, thy ancestors... for lo! their words abide in writing.

The Proverbs of Amenemope, written about 1000 B.C., are the first collection of proverbs in the world. Among those are found:

Better are loaves when the heart is joyous than riches in unhappiness.

Take not gifts from the strong; neither shall 'thou oppress the weak.

A number of the maxims in the Tirukkural are similar, but the Tirukkural shows a great advance of Egyptian ethics. The Egyptians did not have abstract ethical terms like justice, generosity, loyalty, for they thought in terms of the individual and the concrete. They did not say "I walk," but "my legs walk'. Their word for Right is Right direction. Instead of the word 'Ikai' (<if - Generosity) they would express 'to give bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to those who have no clothes" - very much like the Hebrew writers.

Among the Greeks, ethical consciousness grew gradually. In the early stages of Greek culture, as represented in the epics, it is through notions of customary morality that notions of honour, fidelity and service are portrayed. The development is not unlike the development in the Sangam poems, where notions like honour (puhal), self-respect (manam), right and Justice (aram), prevalent among a warrior society lead to even more

abstract considerations, but form customary morality. Greek ethics develops into conscious and rational morality with Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. This rational morality is the stage at which we are able to compare the Tirukkural with Greek ethics as represented in their philosophers and their gnomic poets.

In comparing the Tirukkural with the thought of the Greek philosophers, it should be noted that we are comparing a condensed book of maxims or sutrams with works whose style is diffuse, leisurely, and lengthy, works in which opinions are discussed elaborately and in detail with illustrations from life and history. For instance, Plato deals with the state in many of his dialogues, but especially in his Republic and in his Laws. But the Tirukkural deals with the state in about 600 couplets or 1200 lines. What is remarkable is that the Tirukkural contains the quintessence of that level of thought and supposes an ethical temper and age, in no way inferior to those represented by the Greek philosophers. Tamil society at the Tirukkural period as ethically conscious and cultivated as Greet society in the fourth century B.C. Similarly, the Roman Stoics are conscious, to an exaggerated degree, about loss and wastage of time, for death comes, after which no man can work. In a book of maxim, such leisurely and dithyrambic disquistions on the fleeting nature of existence and the wastage of time are not possible, Valluvar can afford to clinch the same argument in one phrase - வீழ்நாட்படா அமை நன்றாற்றின் or அன்றறிவாம் என்னாது அறஞ் செய்க.

Ethics which had been earlier treated as a part of politics was given a separate place by Aristotle in his book on Ethics called Nicomachean Ethics, from his son Nicomachus, for whom it was written. The theme of Aristotle's Ethics is happiness defined as the active exercise of the mind in perfect conformity with goodness or virtue. The Sophists held that morality was merely for the convenience of society, and that a thinking man could have his own standards and follow his own pleasure and interests. The rational pleasure derived from one's activity is great happiness, second only to contemplation in Aristotle. This emphasis on contemplation is absent in Tirukkural. Being a book of practical ethics and proceeding from a rational plane

except for the introductory verses, and the chapters on asceticism, the rest of the book seems to be humanistic. But the rational happiness is expressed in the Tirukkural by the words இனிது, உவப்பு, இன்னாது, இன்பம் which occur so often. The rational pleasure in other verses, as when one hears one's children's speech, or feels their physical touch Aristotle defines pleasure and pain to consist in the "consciousness, by means of the discriminating faculty of the senses, of coming in contact with good or evil". He conceived the moral sense as analogous to the faculty for appreciating music, which may be more in some persons and less in others and which is capable of being developed. In using the terms இனிது, இன்னாது, இன்பம் how well has Tirukkural shown the rational pleasure arising from virtue and learning! A good man, says Aristotle, is pleased at good action, as a musical man is pleased at good musical tunes. Inbam is the result of Aram and Porul in Tirukkural. All others, wealth etc., help the attainment of Inbam.

In the delineation of virtue, Aristotle chooses the principle of the mean, probably influenced by the "nothing in excess" ideal of the Greeks. What is the virtue of Liberality? It is the mean between prodigality and avarice. What is the virtue of Courage? It is neither rashness nor cowardice, but lies between the two. The moralist, in drawing the beauty of virtue and the results of virtue, finds it easier to define virtue as well as to exhort to virtuous action if he can also outline the opposed vices and defects. The Tirukkural makes use of this method, as does Aristotle. The Tirukkural reflects on Education as well as on Ignorance; on Righteous Rule as well as on Unrighteous Rule, on friendship, on wealth as well as poverty, on perfection as well as on baseness. But there is a difference between Aristotle and Valluvar. Aristotle has been criticized for his concept of virtue, in that he seems to place it in the centre between two extremes, whereas virtue should always be the highest perfection and therefore an extreme. Particularly strong was Kant in his criticism of Aristotle, saying that he reduced the difference between vice and virtue to a mere quantitative difference. But

the Tirukkural does not give room for any such observation, because it inculcated the highest living ethic possible in every aspect of life, without the imposition of any moderating or limiting notion in the concept of virtue.

Let us consider Plato, the master of Aristotle. His great contribution to thought was definition of the State and the place it should occupy in human life. Hence he wrote his Republic at about the age of 40, and perfected his concepts further about the age of 70 with his book on the Laws. The ideal state of Plato is one in which the State is absolute. He conceived of individuals as finding their highest happiness through the state. In both Plato and Aristotle, politics has more an ethical than a mere utilitarian significance. "Political science is concerned," says Aristotle. "With nothing so much with producing a certain character in the citizens, or in other words, with making them good, and capable of performing noble actions". According to Plato, since men cannot be always trusted to know their interests, the State must have the authority to force them into the ways of righteousness. The State is everything in Plato, but that is not so in Tirukkural. Plato is writing about digarchical government in a city - state, but Tirukkural speaks of a monarchical government in which the subjects enjoy their individual liberty, while contributing to the welfare of the State. In the Republic of Plato, occupation is chosen by the State according to the dispositions and aptitudes of the individual; the guardian (ruling class) may not possess private property for all things are held in common; even wives and husbands live in separate camps and come together only on certain days and are mated the best with the best; children are brought up by State nurses and in ignorance of who their parents are. Such ruthless State interference does not occur in the monarchy of the Tirukkural. The Greeks make man primarily a citizen; Tirukkural makes man an individual with social duties.

Further, in Plato's State there is a class system. The State is comprised of the guardian class, the military class and the artisan

or slave class. These are three different strata of society and are thus divided because of the nature of their contribution to the state. Plato used the myth of the metals to justify this tripartite division. Inter-class mobility is permitted under exceptional circumstances - 'sometimes a brass man may have a silver son, in which case he may be promoted. Citizenship rights are given only to those of the military and guardian class. The artisans and slaves are not judged fit for any kind of education, and are incapable of the virtues and the ethical life portrayed by Plato and Aristotle. Both justified the existence of a permanent slave class, to whom moral perfection and education opportunities were denied. "One cannot practise virtue, if one leads the life of an artisan, or of one who labours for pay" says Aristotle. But Tirukkural Says:

பொருளல் லவரைப் பொருளாகச் செய்யும்
பொருளல்ல தில்லை பொருள் (751)

மேலிருந்தும் மேலல்லார் மேலல்லர் கீழிருந்துங்
கீழல்லார் கீழல் லவர். (973)

The Tirukkural is in opposition to the caste-system and class-system and admits the perfectibility of all groups, though' it takes into account heredity and environment. The man to whom the Tirukkural is to be a handbook belongs to no particular station in life. In fact, it seems to object to popular attribution of virtue only to certain groups of persons like ascetics or Anthanar. You hear the voice of the Reformer or of the Sermon on the Mount, "you have heard it said... but I say unto you", The Tirukkural also seeks to rectify wrong social notions, which his society was in danger of admitting.

Plato is unable to achieve his State except by the destruction of family life, of domestic happiness and joy. There is a vast difference between the joys of the Tamil man with his period of courtship, his happiness with his wife and children, and enjoying his wealth in hospitality and giving himself to Society.

Both Plato and Aristotle were restricted in their views of the State, bound as they were by conditions obtaining in the

Grecian city-states, and not providing a theory of wider application and import. The Tirukkural, on the other hand, is not concerned even with the Tamil States. It enunciates the conditions for social and economic happiness in any State given the circumstances of monarchical rule. The Tirukkural has a greater universality of appeal and introduces a kinship with all peoples and an at homeness in all countries. Its theory of the State or of morals is not circumscribed by class, or caste or nation boundaries. Dr. Pope was right when we called the author "the bard of universal man". The Greeks do not evaluate man as man and there is no concept of "humanity" in the manner in which Tirukkural and the Roman stoics understand humanity.

Both Plato and Aristotle are concerned regarding the standards and norms, by which ethical conduct is to be determined. Is every person to determine good conduct by the use of his private reason, or is there a body of past experience to guide him? Both Aristotle and Tirukkural are conservative in character and accept the norms established by the wisdom of the past.

The norms of moral conduct are contained in the actions of good men, the best of the race, and the accepted moral opinion of the time. Aristotle accepts a relativity in morals in that he says that a man's goodness is relative to the conditions obtaining in the State in which he lives, even though, in consequence, he must fall short of the ideally good man in stature. There is, in Aristotle, no provision for moral growth as will make him wiser and more virtuous than his age or nation.

The Tirukkural again is not restrictive in its ideals or its definitions of virtue. It also accepts that standards, norms and patterns of behaviour are provided by the great, the good and the wise men of the present, and the codes which are the repositories of the wisdom of the past. But it fosters a general critical attitude towards every opinion, and exhorts to the highest morality, irrespective of time and place and station of life.

Both Plato and Aristotle condoned practices and institutions, which the twentieth century would not condone. Slavery was to them a very necessary institution for the State, and the physically or otherwise deformed or handicapped children, were to be got rid of from the State. There is no justification of slavery in Tirukkural and as for deformed and handicapped children they formed in the Tamil society of the day symbols of good luck in the retinues of the royal household.

While Eudaemonism or pleasure or happiness is the end in the Greek philosophers, the Tirukkural draws attention to the idea of perfection as something to be attained for its own sake, and a continued improvement of man and of society.

In Plato and Aristotle, the State exists in order to allow the freemen class to devote their time to mental and bodily culture, free from material cares, and to lead in public affairs, but not for progress in ethical life and for perfection in ethical life. The concept of the State in Plato and Aristotle is static, in Tirukkural it is dynamic.

(a) **Thani Nayagam Atikalarin Corpolivukal**
IITS. 1999. pp. 107-118.

(b) **R.P. Sethu Pillai Silver Jubilee Volume.**
Madras Palaniyappa Brothers. 1961. pp. 73-80.

11

PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR

Prof. T.P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAN

3. Kamattuppal

3.1

Tiruvalluvar, as explained in our study of **arattu-p-pal**, has emphasised Love as the basis of human life. This is in accordance with the theories of psychoanalysis, though these theories express this principle in a shockingly revolutionary way. Tiruvalluvar purifies this basic passion and sublimates it. He starts with the love, existing between husband and wife. To him therefore the physical aspect of pure love is nothing mean. Marriage is a glorious institution. But when there is no Love, one embraces the mere physical frame no more than a corpse, as Valluvar will describe it, in his chapter of 'Public women'. The physical embrace becomes human and divine, when it is in addition a communion of two loving souls. The Tamilians conceived it in terms of a fabulous bird with two heads but one life. They also felt that such a love is the crown and glory of a communion, developing through atleast seven previous births. Therefore when such a man and a woman, though unknown to each other in the present birth, meet all of a sudden, they are by nature and Providence, attracted to each

other; and their inner personalities become one in love. Thus, even before marriage, there is this innate experience of love. This is called in Tamil 'Kalavu'. It is pre-marital love, where each soul steals the heart of the other. Kalavu or Stealth emphasises the natural or unconscious process, where the heart of one lover is attracted to the other, even as magnet attracts iron. Tirunanacampantar will speak of the Lord or God lover as 'ullam kavar kalvan', 'one who steals the heart of the beloved'. Kampan, following Nammalvar, will speak here of the coming of the Lord or lover without any actual coming in, because it is really a manifestation of what is already latent - **Vârâtê vara vallây**. The unconscious becomes conscious.

3.2

In this theory of the Tamilians, even physical attraction is something providential, where there is the background of pure love. It is an act of Providence or Nature that their loving souls commingle at first sight, Nature and Providence as it were conspiring to bring them together in a suitable environment, at the appropriate time and place. Such a love is naturally best suited for blossoming into universal love. The Cankam poets have emphasised this great truth. We are told that the great poet Kapilar to explain the message of Tamil to an Aryan king who was himself a musician, composed the great love poetry of Kurinci-p-pattu. After emphasising the chaste love of two such lovers, the poet gives expression to this great ideal of this love when he makes the lady-love express it. "When we live together with our doors open, feeling inspired by hospitality to all those who come, we will enjoy what remains after they are fed, as the crowning glory of this joint life of sacrifice, each seeing in the other's Love the reflected glory, the reflected joy or bliss of the contented society." In some such way we can paraphrase the prayer of the heroine, full of poetic suggestion.

Seen in this light, the Tamilian conception of love between a man and a woman looks almost divine. It is no wonder that in the age of Bhakti revival, this love was actually interpreted as the natural Love between God and the loving soul. Perhaps this later age read the Kamattu-p-pal of Tiruvalluvar in some such way. Tiruvalluvar further purifies the Cankam conception of love. Thus purified the divine-like Love was identified by Tirumular with God in his explanation of his philosophy, starting as he does as a seasoned teacher, from the known and proceeding to the unknown. Therefore the contribution of Tiruvalluvar in this field should be emphasised.

3.3

The Cankam poetry speaks of five aspects of this love: *kurinci* where the lovers meet and become one in loving embrace; *palai* or separation where the pure gold of love shines all the more brilliant thus sublimated in the fire of selfless sacrifice and love, for the higher cause of state, society or learning; *neytal* or a feeling of despair sometimes clouding this life of 'Love where also one meets the suffused glow of Love, amidst trying circumstances, in refusing to die and in continuing to live only for the sake of the other, in the fond hope against hope of meeting the other; *mullai* or the joint domestic life and *marutam* or the sulky mood which often arises even in these loving hearts.

The last mentioned aspect of marutam is exemplified, in Cankam poetry, by the extra-marital relation of the hero. Perhaps the society of women was cut into two, one, of the chaste woman who took up the duties of domestic life and of the continuation of the race and, two, of the free women who though yielding to love refuse to shoulder this duty of a family life but willingly undertook the onerous burden of keeping the torch of the fine arts ever burning more and more gloriously, though themselves sacrificing to a life of art and beauty, of music and dance. Perhaps in such a society, man's devotion to art throws him in the midst of public women, necessitating a kind of a divided allegiance

and all that it implies. The institution of public women cannot always be kept in this ideal position and it descends to the level of prostitution. The lady - love in wed-lock cannot be expected to be happy when she suspects the extra-marital relationship of her lover. She, however, concentrates on the domestic duties demanded by the society. She may excuse the Lover but there has to be at least a righteous resentment because of the family reputation and social ideal. The hero, however, is able to pacify the lady-love because of the prevailing ideal of a social tradition which demands that in the presence of the children and guests, the lovers should, not only show no mutual resentment, but also welcome them really with their commingled hearts of love.

But in any ideal love, this extra-marital relationship is certainly a blot, whatever social reasons may be advanced for its existence. Tiruvalluvar has condemned the institution of public women in his philosophy of government and society. If even high diplomacy and state policy cannot tolerate it, how can pure love find a place for it? Therefore, he does not bring in the public women for exemplifying the marutam aspect of Love. That is one of the major contributions of Valluvar. According to one commentary, the last five chapters deal with marutam; according to another the last four chapters alone deal with marutam. This marutam here is only the natural difficulty involved in two different personalities, natured under two different family environments, coming to commingle and to form a new creative family type. The fusion is not effected in a day. It is a slow process of give and take, sometimes giving rise to misunderstandings but only at the surface level.

3.4

Love at first sight appears, as it were, as a flash of lightning. It is a kind of a revolution which the latent love becomes manifest, leading to physical changes and emotional involvements. This is *Kurinci*. This is absolutely a new experience. The physical beauty brings the unconscious attraction to the conscious level. It looks

as though that some divine enchantment is over powering the lovers. The love is dazed in mind. He feels it as a kind of divine experience; separation he feels will be death. But he senses all the same a life-giving love, full of innocence and modesty, overflowing in the very look of the beloved. He stands almost intoxicated with that love, a hero of many wars but today succumbing to the loving beauty. Her furtive glance and subdued smile are hopeful where words avail nothing. Next follows the divine bliss of her embrace, a bliss which is a feast to all the senses, sweeter than the pleasures of the world of the lotus-eyed Lord, granting him such joys as he desires from every object whenever it is desired. It is not merely a physical pleasure. The very soul is rejuvenated and therefore it is a spiritual bliss. There is also the happiness of fulfillment very much similar to the joy of an ethical life of one who enjoys his allotted share, only after distributing his wealth to all those who deserve it. It is a bliss revealing not only new knowledge and wisdom but also an insight unknown even to his erstwhile rich experience and lofty education. Separation cannot be imagined by him; even a slight waft of the wind coming in between them cannot be tolerated.

3.5

This is the first experience. But such an experience cannot be continuous. There is the necessity for separation for various reasons. They have to retrain themselves for a new life, of give and take. A complete concord has to be created avoiding all misunderstandings. It is this attempt with all its early failures and successes at mutual understanding leading ultimately to a deeper commingling of two personalities, that is looked upon as *ûtal* or *marutam* by Tiruvalluvar. The conception is emphasised in the last five or four chapters. This is a new interpretation of utal 'sulky mood'. Tiruvalluvar is not cutting himself away from the ancient tradition. He is interpreting it in a new way. There is reference to others loving the hero in Tirukkural. But that is not a fact but a kind of teasing of love by the heroine who thus emphasises how the hero has become the loving apple of the eye of all the world. It is from this point of view that the chapter on pulavi nunukkam or the subtle

bouderie, a chapter full of dramatic poetry, should be interpreted. This is indeed a new way of looking at *ûtal*.

But the misunderstanding should not take a deeper root. It should not become hatred. The sulky mood makes the succeeding mood of love, a precious gain worthy of achievement by love. It makes the physical embrace intellectually great, as a new insight, mentally satisfying as resolving all conflicts, ethically glorious as a self-sacrifice and spiritually blissful as a commingling of souls. It should not descend to the level of mere carnal pleasure. The experience of love should be always fresh like the morning breeze. Sulky mood is a kind of a restraint. It reveals the depth of other's love through the other's keen suffering at the delay. It is like the precious salt giving taste to the food when added to it in right proportion. An over doze of salt, however, spoils the taste of food. A prolongation of the sulky mood amounts to torturing one who is already in agony. If loving embrace does not succeed the sulky mood, the withering creeper of love will be cut at its root. Therefore love without strife tastes stale sour like the unripe fruit. There is an ethical grandeur and a beauty of feminine perfection, when the flowery eyes of the beloved feign a sulky mood. But it is not easy to put up this show; the heart melts soon in love in the presence of the Lord. The sulky mood therefore is really an intellectual and physical struggle. Her modesty flies away in his presence. This is the substance of the chapter on 'nencotu pulattal' where the heroine condemns her failing heart. The final consummation of this glorious life of love is found in 'utal uvakai', 'the joy of the sulky mood',. The complete understanding of each other, the deeper insight into other's nature, the resulting bliss of this identity of feeling and insight reveal the perfection reached by the lovers. He is free from defects. But the sulky mood pays rich dividend; for it reveals the depth of his love. Therefore there is no heaven greater than this sulky mood of love. In this competition of mutual sulky mood, those who are defeated really win the laurels of love. Bouderie is the charm of love; and the charm of that again is the sweet embrace.

This is resolution of the conflicts when two different personalities, nurtured under two different environments and having two different physical and emotional developments come together for becoming complementary to each other.

3.6

There is another kind of conflict raised by the social environment which demands separation and sacrifice in love, for the fulfillment of certain social duties, in war and in peace, in education and religion and for the fulfillment of certain family duties in earning the livelihood or wealth. This is *pâlai* or separation. This conflict is therefore different from the other conflict exhibited in *utal*. Here there is a sharing, a common sharing in suffering and sacrifice. Here the two hearts are drawn nearer and nearer to each other. There is always unartal or mutual insight and understanding. Thus *unartal* becomes perfect in both *pirital* and *ûtal*. *Pirital* is also an *ûtal* though with a difference. *Ûtal unartal* and *kûtal* summarise the story of love. In the discharge of their duties they share the sufferings. Here therefore is exhibited love in all its glory, in all its pristine purity. Suffering, common suffering rather than happiness, is the majestic grandeur of tragedy and therefore this story of separation which has a touch of the tragic in it appeals to the human heart in a mysterious way. Akananuru has fifty percent of its verses describing this aspect of separation and suffering, whilst all other aspects of love share amidst themselves the remaining two hundred. According to Paripperumal there are in Valluvar eighteen chapters dealing with separation, whilst the first meeting is described in three chapters and utal in four chapters.

In other words *kurinci* covers three chapters, *marutam* covers four chapters whilst fourteen chapters deal with separation. The question arises what happens to *mullai* and *neytal*. They must be deemed to be included under separation. *Palai* and *neytal* are two varying degrees of separation. *Mullai* often amounts to remaining at home and sharing the domestic and social duties; but sometimes it is exemplified in the sharing of duties and sufferings of social life which in that way separates them. This is the common sharing which is the characteristic

feature of chaste love or *mullai*. Therefore *mullai* also reaches its perfection in a kind of separation, as it is evident in Mullai-p-pattu. According to my old teacher late Mr. Chelvakesavaraya Mudaliar, an old copy which he had of the commentary of Manakkutavar divides the 25 chapters of kamattu-p-pal into 5 divisions of 5 chapters each. The first five belong to *kurinci*, the second five to *pâlai*, the third five to *mullai*, the fourth five to *neytal* and the fifth five to *marutam*. Therefore the chapters assigned to separation by Paripperumal will cover *pâlai*, *mullai* and *neytal*.

Though Paripperumal tries to justify this three fold division of Kamattu-p-pal on the basis of Vatsyayana, he himself feels the force of objections to his own theory and therefore finally concludes that this three-fold division of Kamattu-p-pal into union, separation and the sulky mood can be explained according to the Tamil convention itself-for *kûtal*, *pirital* and *ûtal* are well known terms in the Tamil theory of love. Whatever it be, this way of looking at Tirukkural clearly brings out the psychological importance of this three-fold division in the development of a personality well integrated with family and society. Though Paripperumal tells us this is a Tamil convention, such a convention finds its finest exemplification only in Tirukkural.

This is certainly much more elucidating than the older distinction between *kalavu* and *karpu* which is the division of the kamattu-p-pal according to Parimelalakar. According to him the first seven chapters deal with *kalavu*. and the remaining eighteen chapters deal with *karpu*. Parimelalakar also feels that by *karpu* one has to understand here only separation. *Marutam* which implies, extra-marital relationship according to the old tradition is also in the opinion of Parimelalakar a kind of separation from lady-love. It is a nearer separation as contrasted with *palai* which is a more distant separation. Therefore *mullai* and *neytal* also must be deemed to very unfortunate that Parimelalakar should bring in public women when Tirukkural does not justify Valluvar's contribution in reinterpreting marutam on a psychological basis. Parimelalakar feels that Valluvar follows the Sanskrit tradition in describing love, only in terms of union and separation and that therefore he has

included *mullai*, *neytal* and marutam under *pâlai* or separation which according to him is the characteristic feature of the major part of *karpu*. On the face of it, this is a forced interpretation. All these difficulties arise because it is not realised that there is an original contribution by Tiruvalluvar who in spite of his deep knowledge of the Tamil and Sanskrit traditions, cuts new grounds as explained by Parripperumal. The importance of this distinction has already been emphasised.

3.7

This new approach makes the very headings of chapters on separation illuminating. After the first embrace and union, the spiritually intoxicated lover gives expression to his experience of his beloved - her tenderness and modesty and her fresh beauty and charm which seem to put to flight the beauties of Nature. He thus praises in a highly imaginary poetry, the inner joy inspired by her. Then follows a much more restrained statement on the greatness of this Love. It is a commingling of complementary aspects of human personalities making life richer and sweeter, and really creating a new integrated life of the physical body and soul-never-to-be forgotten realisation of the union of two souls ever present in their eyes and hearts. Then follows the next stage where this Union has to be accepted by the world at large. Dharma and Love demand this and therefore there can be no sense of false shame. This is expressed in terms of the traditional language of *matal* where the hero in the face of the opposition from the parents of his lady proposes to cut away his body by being dragged on a horse - like vehicle shaped out of saw-like leaf stalks of the palmyra. From the point of view of the heroine there is the fear that their love is being suspected by the scandal mongers without the realisation by others of true love. This fortunately draws lovers together-a great psychological truth united between themselves stood separated from the world. But time comes when they have no separation because of the social duties-a separation which is felt slowly creeping into their life; it looks as though it spells death. Such is the depth of their love. But soon its necessity is realised though gradually, and therefore, there arises the conflict of emotions and wandering thoughts where the confidence in Love stands as

though shattered. The body itself in spite of all her reasonings rebels against this separation, it becomes weak; the healthy colour fades; sleep refuses to come; the tears rush to the eyes. There is thus the conflict which corrodes her life. His thoughts in separation make her miserable and there is a cry of despair. And yet in spite of her seeming condemnation of his love, her eyes long for the sight of the lover, but only to suffer greater pain; and she speaks as though taking a revenge on this eye which gave her the sight of the beauty of her Lord. In a poetic way, she feels separated from her eyes, and seems to enjoy in a revengeful mood the miserable tears of the eyes. There is certainly a bit of madness even in this poetic effusion which therefore shows the despondent mood. Then follows the fading of her beautiful colour but speaks of the inner suffering. She knows that the separation is something to be put up with; but the heart refuses to listen to the dictates of the intellect. There succeeds the stage when she feels her isolation in a mood of suspicion, that the lover is not feeling the pangs of separation while discharging his duties. Coming out of this shell of isolation, the lovers give expression to their feeling of misery to others. Unlike liquor love is sweet even when recollected. Here again there are conflicting thoughts, about the other. Is he thinking of the love or is he restraining the thoughts of love? How could anyone forget, "He will not be angry however I may think of him" cries the lady. At the next stage, loving thoughts become so firmly rooted that even in dreams they occur and nature seems to restore the joy, at least in the dreams, but only to make the waking hours much more disappointing. This life of isolation is dreadful, and the love looks around the beauties of nature, the calm and retiring evening when the whole world of lovers, the world of bees and birds, rush back to their sacred haven of a loving home, to be hugged in by their beloved. This increases by contrast her feeling of separation. What is heaven to others is to her a veritable hell and she condemns the evening time and all its beauties as messengers of death. Her body is still further weakened; the eyes lose their lustre; her shoulders become

emaciated, the shoulders which embraced him now declare his faithlessness by losing the bangles which slip away. In her growing feeling of isolation, she withdraws into herself. In a mood of despair she speaks to her heart as though it were separate from her. Here again conflicting emotions are given expression to. A further stage is reached where unable to restrain the misery, she openly gives expression to her love as she had never done before. Her feeling of modesty can no longer restrain such an open exhibition of love. The conflicts are being resolved. But this, at first takes the form of succumbing to the inevitable. She feels that her heart, her body and her eyes in spite of herself hanker after him. The lover also rushes back to her. The separation makes their reunion as fresh as the first union. There is however the outside restraint. But the inner feelings transgress their bounds. This restraint makes the innocent charms of human nature, much more wonderful and beautiful. Her love is lying hidden in her smile like the fragrance which is expressed through eyes. There is the pain of her love and she begs for relief. At the next stage there is hankering after embrace, where all thoughts of finding fault in the other fly away. It is a kind of intoxication but a spiritual intoxication where one indulges in drinking even when one feels the evil effects of that intoxication. There is no hard heartedness in love. Even tenderer than a flower is love and few there be who know its delicacy and deal with it gently. Thus ends every thing in the embrace of love.

This summary at once reveals something new in Akam poetry. This is much more truthful to psychology and escapes from the tradition which often robs poetry of its charm.

After this resolution of the conflicts raised by social duties, follows the complete integration of the two personalities as described in terms of *ûtal* and *kûtal*, already referred to. Thus is seen the original contribution of Valluvar in describing the development of this integration though seemingly within the frame work of the older traditions.

The purists in Tamil have a bias against the word kamam which is according to them a Sanskrit word. Therefore, they would prefer the name inpattu-p-pal instead of Kamattu-p-pal. There is also another reason, why kaman has suffered a kind of deterioration in its signification. The Jains and others believing in renunciation as the highest perfection reached by man, naturally condemned kamam as something demeaning. Cintamani, therefore, sings: 'kamam ilittitappattatanre,' 'Kamam has been condemned as the meanest' But this is not the ancient Tamil tradition which, as already hinted, Kapilar explained to an Aryan king. Tamil was there and elsewhere actually identified with this kamam. Gradually, in course of time, the opposition from the Buddhists and the Jains increased. Even the Vedic scholars joined in this onslaught on kamam. The poets of the Tamil tradition of a later age claim a unique greatness for this Cankam theory of Love. *Tinaimalainurraimpatu* according to an old verse was composed for beautifying this theory of love so that the hatred of those who oppose that theory may be appeased. There is a much more direct attack on this opposition hinted in *Paripatal* where the Tamilian conception of Love is contrasted with the theory of marriage as contemplated by the Vedic scholars. The main attack is concentrated on showing that the later life is not based on real Love. Tiruvalluvar knows nothing of such an opposition. Even if he had known such an opposition, he has purified the conception so much that no opponent can raise any valid objection to his theory of Love. It is because of this that Jain works like the commentary on Nilakeci claim Tirukkural as a Jain authority.

Therefore, in the age of Tiruvalluvar kamam was idealised. Kamam has been equated with Love and not with mere physical pleasures or lust. Manakkutavar at first interprets kaman as anpu, though to satisfy the other view, he hastens to add it may mean also 'physical union'. It is the emphasis on Love even in the life of physical pleasures that is important in Tirukkural. It is not mere physical pleasure, but the elevating human love which is experienced through the five senses, that is kaman. It is therefore

different from other material pleasures. As already stated, there is achieved here a spiritual and ethical grandeur. There is nothing demeaning in this kamam which as it were deifies matter, mind and soul. One need not be ashamed of this kamam having its root in physical pleasures. One need not be apologetic and explain that kamam is only an aesthetic experience. Such an interpretation will not bring out the beautiful integration of the physical, mental, moral and spiritual personality of man-an integration-which is emphasised on his own unique way by Tiruvalluvar. Dr. Graul and Dr. Pope at first were misled by the name of kamattu-p-pal because in the later age the word kamam has become a synonym for lust. But when they were persuaded to read a portion of this kamattu-p-pal, they at once realised, the unique greatness of this theory of Love which Valluvar describes from the highest pedestal ever reached by human perfection. One should, therefore, do nothing to disturb this unique greatness-a greatness which Schweitzer explains as the unique glory of the world-affirming philosophy of Kural.

Kamam is not *inpam*. *Inpam* is the final effect aimed at. But all pleasures cannot be glorified as revealing human perfection. That is why the ancient Tamilians use the term *anpin aintinai*, "the five-fold human conduct of Love" emphasising the fundamental basis of Love which alone can glorify any happiness. The Tamilians equated this word *kamam* with *anpu* which is much more general; *kamam* means the love which the lovers feel towards each other. Tiruvalluvar uses the phrase *kamattirku inpam* which differentiates between kamam and inpam as cause and effect. Love becomes a bliss in the right kind of sulky mood. Therefore to take kamam as a synonym of inpam is to miss the contribution of Valluvar, in aiming at a complete integration of all the aspects of human life. It is because of this the phrase inpa anpu, "anpu or love which is Bliss" becomes so important even in the spiritual sphere as is evidenced by the use of the term by Cekkilar in describing the final prayer of Karaikkalammaiyar.

3.8

It will be thus clear that Tiruvalluvar is nearer the Cankam tradition. There is another important aspect of Tirukkural which conclusively proves this standpoint. Cankam poetry has no narrative verse. It consists of dramatic monologues capturing the poetic moment in beautiful phrases of lightning flashes revealing the varied aspects of human love, either from the intrinsic or from extrinsic point of view. Kamattu-p-pal similarly consists only of dramatic monologues; there is no dramatic narration of any story. Therefore, according to that Cankam tradition, kamattu-p-pal was divided under three headings. The first seven chapters consists of the dramatic monologues of Man. The next twelve chapters form the monologues of Woman. The remaining seven form the monologues of both the man and the woman. This is the division which is explained in a verse in Tiruvalluvamalai attributed to Mocikiranar. Kalinkar's commentary seems to follow this division as is made clear by his introduction to the chapter on Pirivarramai, ''Inability to bear sepatation". Even the other commentators point out by specifying the speaker under each one of the two hundred and fifty verses. This is enough to show that Tiruvalluvar is following the Cankam tradition and not any other tradition, though here again he has made his unique contribution in having his chapters forming the rungs of his ladder of love.

3.9

We have already referred to the theory that Thiruvalluvar owes his inspiration to Vatsyayana. But as has been hinted even Pariperumal admits that Tirukkural can be explained in terms of the Tamil tradition itself. Vatsyayana writes a science on physical pleasures of lust. One has only to compare the headings of Vatsyayana's works with the headings in kamattu-p-pal. Kamam is not merely love according to Vatsyayana. It is the pleasure of physical union even though love may be absent; and according to Vatsyayana and others the woman embraced

may be a virgin, a prostitute or a wife of another man. They are interested in stating facts without bringing in any question of values. But Tiruvalluvar is interested in describing the ideal. He has condemned the hankering after another man's wife as something which goes against Dharma and social well-being. It may give pleasure but he will never condescend to call it kamam. He has condemned the institution of prostitutes in his theory of State and Society. The embrace of a prostitute is the embrace of a corpse according to him; for there is no living inspiration of love. As Paripperumal has himself pointed out, Tiruvalluvar is interested in describing the idealised embrace of love based on Dharma and working for the social well-being. It is therefore to miss the very life of Tirukkural, if one were to identify Vatsyayana's scientific approach with the normative approach of Tiruvalluvar. This is not to minimise the greatness of Vatsyayana's contributions, but it is to emphasise the unique greatness of Tirukkural even as a kamasastra. Valluvar is concerned with values and not with physical facts. This is not to deny that Valluvar might have had knowledge of the Sanskrit kamasutras and kamasastras even if we assume that Vatsyayana was not earlier than Valluvar; for the study of kamasutras can be assigned to a pre-Christian era. Nor is this to condemn Valluvar as an idealist losing touch with realities of the worldly life. The very fact that like the psychoanalysts, Valluvar has seen the force of love and has made it therefore the foundation of his philosophy shows how practical he is, in spite of his concern for values and the ideal.

3.10

Whilst the psychoanalysts emphasise the unconscious, Tiruvalluvar helps one to reach the super conscious, through sex. The definition of *anpu* is a relationship in which the persons do not love their own personalities at the expense of others which will be *âcai*, but give freely to others. "Uriyar pirarkku" "they belong to others" reminds us of the Greek and Christian

conception of Philia as contrasted with Egocentred eros and God-centred agape.

D' Arcy explains a conception of sex and love which makes Tiruvalluvar's theory much more lucid. "The culmination of all true love even in human experience is not only complete absence of the consciousness of self but the realisation of the universal in and through our particular passion. The closer one looks at the various manifestations of human love the more one is conscious of a congruity between spiritual love and sex. These various manifestations are not haphazard; they disclose a sequence as unified and progressive as a symphony of music by a great master. It is as if some presiding genius of the species were watching over the expression of love and regulating the human lottery.

"Sex proves to be the surest means of arousing and sustaining love. The permanence of the species is assured and at the same time the greatest variety of the individual encouraged. The vital energies allow themselves to be transformed into something spiritual. What was begun in carnality ends in heaven. What seemed to be mere animal breeding partakes of spirituality and what appears at first to be just a bodily function acquires a value of its own above even that of knowledge. So it came about that the vital energies can be enlisted in the service of the soul and the highest spiritual experience await those who are faithful to the institution of Nature. The art of loving is not in the least what the libertine tradition would have us believe. It is rather the Science of making the fleeting loves of youth endure and multiply in fresh waves of experience throughout the course of loving human life. Love is no episode; it imposes itself like a divinely regulating inspiration and offering the promise of an undreamt of perfection."

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12

TRUTH AS DEPICTED IN TIRUVALLUVAR AND KABIR

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Tamil literature of Sangam Age is unique in content and approach but Tirukkural is a poetical work of unparalleled vigour and beauty. Our national poet Subramania Bharati said :

> *வள்ளுவன் தன்னை உலகினுக் கேதந்து*
> *வான்புகழ் கொண்ட தமிழ்நாடு.*

Tamilnad gave unto the world Valluvar, (The author of the Kural) and won thereby great renown."

The sage Tiruvalluvar was a 'rishi' who had the glimpse of real 'truth.' This 'yogin' of Tamilnadu addressed to the whole community of mankind without taking into account the caste, creed, people or belief. The Kural has won appreciation from scholars and thinkers of various nationalities. In the words of Rev. Percival :

> "Nothing certainly in the whole compass of human language can equal the force and terseness of the sententious distichs in which the author conveys the lessons of wisdom."[1]

Tiruvalluvar is very emphatic in advocating virtue and good conduct. Kural has 'aphoristic brevity' and 'felicity of expression.' Tiruvalluvar was conscious of the validity of his

message, hence the Upanishad-like pattern of saying the truth as experienced by building a model society, hence he incorporated Dharma (Aram), Artha (Porul) and kama (Inbam) in one book. The description of Moksha is not there; a plausible explanation is that if a man lives according to these ideals of Dharma, Artha and kama, will the Moksha remain behind? It will be a natural outcome for such a man. Sir A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar in the foreword of Hindi Translation of Tirukkural by Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu remarked :

> "It is unfortunate that, while the treasures of the ancient Tamil classics are better known and better appreciated by scholars in Western lands, very little attention has been paid to such works by scholars in other parts of India."

This remark touched me and while taking up research work this ideal was supreme. Now that a comparative study of Tiruvalluvar and Kabir has been done and Tiruvalluvar has been introduced to Hindi knowing scholars and general public in my own humble way. I earnestly feel that Hindi literature has to broaden its horizons, and works of Tamil literature-classic as well as modern-should be made available to Hindi knowing people. To me the study of Tirukkural is as important as the study of Dharma-sastara. I will venture to say that Tirukkural is perhaps the only book which can provide knowledge ideal and practical and at the same time which has survived through the centuries of changing world. The passage of time has enhanced the value of this monumental work.

The society of Tiruvalluvar was uninterrupted by political chaos or corruption, but Kabir lived in a century when there was complete political chaos and idealism had lost its value. Tiruvalluvar was a scholar with a systematic knowledge of his cultural heritage, without which a work like Tirukkural cannot be composed. Kabir lacked proper education, his knowledge emerges from the contacts he had with religious teachers expounding their various doctrines and from the pilgrims from all parts of India. It is because of this that the pattern of Kabir's

poetry is quite different from that of Tiruvalluvar. Kabir was always in a fighting mood, Tiruvalluvar is calm and balanced throughout. It was the knowledge of God, and of the things of God, which Kabir sought after with all his heart and mind but his approach is negative. In Tirukkural the approach is throughout positive and practical at the same time, without jeopardising the ideals which are so dear to our poet. Both the poets were trying to improve the society and take it towards the ideal. Valluvar's outlook was much more fundamental. In his poetry the concept of universal humanism is the basic point. He is a Rishi who helps the society by making the most difficult ideals sound easy so that none is disappointed. He has a penetrating insight about the human psychology and is fully aware of the capabilities and weaknesses of human beings. It is because of this insight that he is able to provide the right path to all those who venture to enter the realm of Tirukkural. He provides the basic fundamental concepts which remain unchanged with the changing times. In this way he is completely practical and makes a synthesis of ideal and practical. Dharma, Artha and Kama-the three 'purusharthas' are taken together to provide a complete sketch of the proper course of action in all times, in all societies and for all human beings.

The main object of this paper is to attempt a comparative study of 'Truth' as depicted by Tiruvalluvar and Kabir. It is possible that such an attempt may appear arbitrary, though truth may indeed appear universal. But it is not so arbitrary, however, when we consider the gap of about fourteen centuries along with the different geographical, social and political backgrounds. These factors are likely to make distinctive the particular aspects of truth, Tiruvalluvar and 'Kabir gave expression to. The 'weaver of Mylapore' and the 'weaver of Kashi' both are unique in sincerity and courage. Their sayings reveal a deep understanding of moral value and a deeper penetrating depiction of society. As explained earlier Tiruvalluvar was providing an ideal outlook which explains the constructive, positive attitude of his poetry whereas Kabir was struggling to reform a degenerated and

diseased society. In spite of this difference of approach there was something common, we have successfully survived the foreign invasions and assimilated all that was good.

In the preface to his famous translation of Tirukkural V.V.S. Aiyar aptly remarked,

> "Very few in the world outside of the Tamil country have heard the name of the poet whose work is presented here in a new English garb. And yet he is one of those seers whose ,message is intended not merely for their own age or country but for all times and for all mankind."[2]

This was 1916, inspite of various translations in various languages, Indian thought, as depicted in Tirukkural, is yet to reach effectively the people of this nation. Prof. T.P. Meenakshisundaran said about 'Kural':

> "The work is universal in its appeal, emphasising the truths of life which remain true in all ages and in all lands.... Giving as he does, his poetic vision of moral principles, his epigrams cease to be merely didactic, lifeless platitudes and become inspired poetry."[3]

My humble submission is that a comparative study of this 'inspired poetry' with the sayings of poets and saints of North India will give us a wider understanding and a better perspective of the various aspects of Indian thought. Kabir, the great reformer and 'an apostle of unity' of faiths in 'higher plane of true knowledge' represents religious revival of Northern India. This religious revival was brought from South to the North by Ramananda:

> "A hater of religious exclusivism, and seeking above all things to initiate men into liberty of the children of God."

Kabir gave us ' spontaneous expressions of his vision and love."[4]

How Tiruvalluvar and Kabir come closer to each other in this study of truth may be better appreciated in the light of the various commentaries of truth, we discover in various scriptures

and epics of our land. We take here only a few of them. In Mundaka Upanishad the rishi says:

> "Truth alone conquers, not untruth. By truth is laid out the path leading to the Gods by which the sages who have their desires fulfilled travel to where is that supreme abode of truth."[5]

Manu says:

"One should speak truth and speak (what is) pleasant, should not speak unpleasant truth ; one should not speak pleasant falsehood."[6]

In the light of the above, the saying of Rama in Valmiki Ramayana seems a continuation of the same idea. He says.

> "The Gods and sages esteem truth as the highest principle. He who utters truth attains the supreme state. Men fear a liar as they do a venomous serpent, truth is the root of all felicity and the support not only of this world but the best means of attaining heaven."[7]

Thiruvalluvar defines truth as:

> "The speaking of that which is free from even the slightest taint of evil."

To further elaborate this he maintains,

> "Even falsehood is of the nature of truth if it bringeth forth unmixed good."[9]

Parimelazhagar's commentary elucidates it,

> "To state a fact which produces no harm and to state that which is not a fact but which is productive of good to others are truth : similarly to state a non-fact unproductive of good and to state a fact which produces harm are falsehood."[10]

We find this is in close resemblance with 'staya' of Sankhyayoga ethics where,

> "The criterion of truth is that it must do good to others and should not hurt them. Any statement which injures others is a sin, even though it may correspond to facts, and only has a seeming semblance to virtue whereby it leads to greatest misery."[11]

Truth can be seen from two angles - the supreme reality and truthfulness in the society. Thiruvalluvar has explained both in two different chapters. In the Chapter titled (வாய்மை)

'Vaymai' he defines truthfulness. In (மெய்யுணர்தல்) 'Realisation of truth' he explains the 'Knowledge of true nature of things." According to Kural 355 this:

"True knowledge is the perception concerning every thing of whatever kind, that thing is the true thing."[12]

In the chapter (மெய்யுணர்தல்) 'Realisation of truth' Tiruvalluvar says:

"Behold the man who is freed from delusion and who hath an unclouded vision: darkness ceaseth for him and joy cometh unto him."[13]

Kabir's realisation of truth implies freedom from bondage of delusion which is possible with knowledge. Freedom from unnecessary bickering indulging in systematic search for Truth is the way of attaining Him. He is so forceful about the search of the Real that he says :

"If a son has not indulged in seeking the Truth, why did his mother not become a widow before giving birth to him." [14]

The conception of 'Mukti' i.e. freedom from bondage has been invoked by Tiruvalluvar to explain the realisation of knowledge of truth.

Behold the man who hath studied and hath realised the Truth: he shall enter the path leadeth not again into this world."[15]

In the next Kural, he again stresses the same idea by saying, "Verily those that have meditated upon and attained to the Truth need not think at all of future incarnations."[16]

Tiruvalluvar has indicated studies and meditation as the means of realising truth. In Kabir the studies are not given much importance. He recognised that scriptures were valuable but was not willing to attach undue importance to them. He was a believer in,

"Quiet reflection as a means of approach to God" [17]

He says,

"Let me make self reflection my saddle, And put my foot in the stirrup of divine love. They are good riders who keep themselves aloof from the Vedas and the Kuran."[18]

Kabir has indicated the need of Guru, for realising truth. The true Guru has been given a higher status than God Himself. Sometimes in his verses he uses the word 'Guru' to mean God. According to him great care must be taken in choosing a Guru so that a false Guru be avoided.

"When his guru is blind, what can the disciple do?"

The blind urges on the blind, both fall into the well.[19] He was against all ceremonies and rituals, Kabir condemns those who performed ceremonial ablutions and cleansings and rituals without the purification of heart. Birth as a human being has given a wonderful opportunity : to remove the bondage of transmigration, and those who fail to seize this opportunity are really foolish. This idea is not new, many great saints and philosophers of this country have said this earlier, but the absolute faith, passionate appeal and original way of putting these ideas is a real achievement of Kabir. Importance must be attached to his fearlessness, frank disposition in the context of opposition from all those whose interests were being harmed. These were mainly muhammadan mullas and Hindu pandits; who with their vain knowledge were proud of their learning and whose gains emerged from ceremonies and rituals. Tiruvalluvar was not involved in such preoccupations. He was producing a treatise of ethical, moral codes uninterrupted by any such social struggle. He depicted both the house holder and ascetic, as both the orders of life *(प्रव ति, निवत्ति)* were prevalent in his society, although importance of the house holder was definitely much more than that of the ascetic. In Tiruvalluvar the way of knowledge of truth includes conquering all attachments and desires, leaving anger and delusion. Kabir has stressed high moral values and detachment from worldly belongings. He asks people to avoid envy end greed, anger and harsh words, as this is the way of acquiring righteousness. He says,

"Those who do not strive to know the truth, suffer in the end."

That is why he indicates,

"Do only that is true , do not indulge in nay thing useless otherwise you will repent.

All doubts should be eliminated as it is a big hindrance in the path of truth. On receiving that light there remains no worldly pain, one is free from the bondage of reincarnation. One attains the highest bliss and achieves immortality. Tiruvalluvar was not discussing truth with any particular philosophical outlook, which necessarily limited the treatment of the subject. Kabir on the other hand, was trying to assimilate various philosophical and religious (Vedanta, Bhakti, Islam, Sufism etc.) outlooks. After assimilation, he was trying to put the ideas in a form acceptable to people of all religions and faiths.

In Kabir, 'purity of heart' and 'Truth', are intermingled.

"To be truthful is best of all, if the heart be truthful. A man may speak as much as he likes; but there is no pleasure apart from truthfulness."[20]

Kabir was conscious of his society giving respect to false hood.

"Milk etc. is difficult to sell, whereas wine is being sold easily."

In Kabir, truth gets the supernatural meaning. Here 'Truth is God' it is the same as Allah, Ram or Hari. He, the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient is the truth in Kabir. Kabir wants people to speak the truth, to believe in Him, the greatest 'Truth'.

"Speaking truth is the highest Tapa. He resides in the hearts of the pure-hearted."

According to Tiruvalluvar purity of heart is proved by truthfulness. The idea of Tapa is present in Kural 296 wherein the poet says,

There is no greater renown for a man than the renown that he is a stranger into falsehood : such a man obtaineth every blessing without mortifying the body."

Kabir as indicated earlier was struggling to reform a society which was deeply involved with external religious observances, sects, religious garbs, pilgrimages etc. Hence he stresses forcefully

the purity of mind and purity of heart in the context of real 'Dharma'. He says:

> "Truth resides within the heart and is revealed in love, in strength, in compassion."

Tiruvalluvar was not facing such social phenomenon, but he was poetical and ethical at the same time. All that he was saying was to mould the characters and guide the lives of innumerable people.

Both Valluvar and Kabir attach so much importance to Truth (Satyam) that it becomes the highest ideal of life. Kural 300 says.

Both Valluvar and Kabir attach so much importance to Truth (Satyam) that it becomes the highest ideal of life. Kural 300 says.

> "Many things have I seen in this world: but of all the things that I have seen, there is nothing that is higher than truth."

The same echo can be heard in Kabir when he says'

"No act of devotion can equal truth, no crime is so heinous as falsehood, in the heart where truth abides, there is my abode."[21]

Kabir had what he calls 'thirst for the Infinite' which explains his real truth.

> "It is in the kingdom of truth, contentment and purity, that this battle is raging : and the sword that rings forth most loudly is the sword of His Name."[22]

The fight of the truth-seeker is a hard fight, 'for the vow of the truth-seeker is more hard than that of the warrior' but in spite of all difficulties the 'truth-seeker's battle goes on day and night, as long as life lasts it never ceases.'[22] This question of truth and God has been a subject of discussion for philosophers, social reformers and all thinking men. Tiruvalluvar's version of truth is influenced by the principle of non-injury, 'Ahimsa'. He maintains:

> "If a man can live without ever uttering a falsehood, all other virture is superfluous unto him."

Kabir has also maintained the principle of 'Ahimsa' throughout his sayings, although he attaches special importance to 'ultimate truth'. In various 'sakhis' he exhorts people to speak the truth, but his tendency of defining God as truth is uppermost. Mahatma Gandhi when asked to define God said.

> "But now a days nothing to completely describe by God as Truth. Denial of God we have known. Denial of Truth we have not known."

Today when we are passing through a period of uncertainty and 'spiritual chaos' the need of this 'truth' need not be emphasized.

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3. Collected works, p.41.
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5. सत्यमेव जयति नानृ तं सत्येन पन्था विततो देवयानः।

   येनाक्रमन्त्य भायो ह्यासकामा यत्र तत्सत्यस्य परमं निधानम्।। मुण्डक। 3–1–6
6. सत्यं ब्रूयात्प्रियं ब्रूयात्र ब्रूयात्सत्यमप्रियम्।

   प्रियं च नृतं ब्रूयादे ा धर्म :सनातन :।। मनुस्मति 4 – 138
7. सत्यमेवेख रो लोके सत्ये धर्म : सदाश्रित : ।

   सत्यभूतनि सर्वाणि सत्यात्रास्ति परं परम् ।। वा. रामायण . अयो. 109–13
8. Kural, 291
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12. Kural of Tiruvalluvar, V.V.S. Iyer.
13. Kural, 352.

14 यस्तु विज्ञानवान् भवति समनस्क : सदाशुचि :।

   स तु तत्पदमाप्रोति यस्माद् भूयो न जायते ।। कठोपनिपाद् 1–3–8

जिहिं कुल पूत न ग्यांन विचारी वाकी विधवा कस न भई महतारी।

क. ग्र. प. 37

15. Kural, 356.
16. Kural, 357.
17. Kabir and the Kabir Panth, G. H. Westcott.
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13

DIDACTIC TEACHINGS OF TIRUVALLUVAR AND GURU NANAK

Dr. Harnam Singh Shan

When the holy poet of Mylapore himself wrote centuries ago:

> Just as closer study of a good book yields increasing pleasure every time it is read, so does deeper friendship among good men results in greater happiness the more and more it is cultivated. (Ch.79, No.: 783)

Who could know that his own book, Kural, shall turn out soon as such "a good book" and will serve not only one but two equally important functions of yielding ever-increasing happiness and deeper friendship among good men all around? who could even think then that this little book, consisting only of 1330 couplets will be cherished by millions throughout centuries even as their Oracle or their sacred Book, as sacred as the Bible is to the Christians,the Quran is to the Muslims and the Torah is to the Jews?[1] Nobody could even deem then that it would enter the very soul of a whole people and become for them the abiding authority on all social, cultural and ethical subjects. Even its author might hardly have been consicous then of the fact that his epigrammatic jottings would be considered later not only as holy utterances of oracular effect but their collection would also be acclaimed as a remarkable poetical master piece of immortal

standing. None of his contemporaries too could ever have thought of its ever becoming the subject of so many renderings and expositions to the extent of its being chosen one day as probably the first sole book of the East to be studied and discussed thus at such a national seminar organised with the aid of the University Grants Commission of India.

The reasons for all that esteem and popularity are quite obvous. The celebrated author of this oldest and greatest classic of Tamil has throughout been considered as the most popular and honoured Teacher, Guide and Philosopher of the Tamilians. His teachings contained in this immortal book have been a source of eternal inspiration, delight and enlightenment for the people of his land. These have all along been serving them - not only as an integrated picture of their civilization, a magnificient synthesis of their culture and the embodiment of all that is best in their literary heritage, but also as the unique and universally - accepted guide for their moral, social, material and spiritual prosperity.

2

But its overall utility and unique contribution has been recognised and acknowledged primarily in the field of their moral well being. "From the time the Kural was published", says Justice Subrahmanyam, "the Tamils have recongnised in it their own inner voice speaking to them of righteousness, justice and morality."[2]

The Kural, however, answers and has since been answering the 'inner Voice' not only of the Tamils but also of the whole mankind. It contains truths which are common to all times, places and persons. It is in fact a great book of morals which "deals in extenso with the moral values of life which foster neighbourliness and love among all men and women to whatever race or community they may belong."[3] It is virtually a moral code compiled by a great humanitarian who has rightly been honoured as "the bard of the Universal Man." Hence said Ariel

who was probably the first to introduce it to the French speaking people more than a century ago: "That which above all is wonderful in the Kural is the fact that its author addresses himself, without regard to castes, people or beliefs, to the whole community of mankind; the fact that he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason, that he proclaims in their very essence in their internal abstractedness, virtue and truth; that he presents, as it were, in one group the highest laws of domestic and social life...."[4] Its appeal is thus universal, its approach cosmopolitan and its object is purely humanitarian.

That being so, it is justly been acclaimed as a marvellous synthesis of Universal Humanism and claimed as their own by the protogonists of a good number of faiths and sects. Dr. Pope has particularly been "struck by the similarity of some of the ideas expressed in it with the teachings of Jesus." Many passages according to him, are "strikingly Christian in their spirit."[5] This can be said about the similar teachings of some other faiths as well. As man is man everywhere and human experience is everywhere the same, the possibility of such similarities can hardly be denied or ruled out.

3

We find them present at least in the teachings of Guru Nanak (1469 - 1539), the celebrated founder of a modern and universal religion in the North.

Guru Nanak, though widely known as a prophet or preceptor was essentailly a man.[6] The man in him was first and foremost a Teacher, a World-Teacher, for whom the whole world, it seems, was a class-room and its people the pupils. He himself accepted for himself the role the status of a Teacher, not of a God or a prophet; but a teacher with a great difference, and the one who conformed to his own definition of a Teacher, which reads:

> He alone is a Teacher who imparts true instruction to his pupils[7]

He, indeed, was such a Teacher who considered the whole earth as Dharamsal[8] and likened it to a school meant for learning and practising Dharma, as well as for developing God-oriented souls. He was such an ideal Teacher who cherished an implicit faith in the destiny of his pupils and who "believed that all human beings have a basic fund of goodness which, like the pearl in the oyster, only awaits the opening of the shell to emerge and enrich him. But most human beings are as ignorant of the goodness in them as the deer is of the aromatic Kasturi in its navel; and just as the deer wanders about in the woods to fall in the snares of poachers or becomes a victim of the hunter's darts, so man falls in the snares of maya (illusions).

The chief task of the Guru[9] (The Teacher) is to make man aware of the treasure within him and then help him to unlock the Jewel Box."[10] He was such a marvellous teacher who while accomplishing such a noble task did not recognise any distinction between man and man on the basis of his caste or class, race or religion, country or community. His first biographer, the highly learned Bhai Gurdas (1551 - 1629), called him rightly, therefore, the Divine world - teacher - Zahir pir Jagat Guru Baba[11] who imparted true instruction to pupils of all creeds and callings, climes or classes of all over the world for all times to come. According to him,

Guru Nanak re-established Dharma,

All castes be merged into one caste of man,

The rich and the poor he brought on one level,

From this founder of Humanity a new race of love goes forth.

In humility they bow to each other,

The Master and the disciple became one...[12]

His attiude as a Teacher, therefore, was humanitarian, his approach spiritual, his appeal universal, his teaching cosmopolitan; and his lessons were common for one and all about whom he claims without any reservation:

we, who have taken shelter in God, are God's own people. We are neiher high, nor low, nor in - between.[13]

The holy compiler and editor of his sacred writings, Guru Arjan (1581 - 1606), paying his tribute to their universality and pecularity, proclaimed therefore -

> Whether one belongs to the martial or to the priestly class, to the commercial or to the agricultural caste, all can swim across by cherishing the Name of God. Guru Nanak has instructed all, without making any distinction, in this divine wisdom; whosoever hears (and follows it), is ferried across the Ocean of Existence.[14]

Almost similar was the case with most of the teachings of Tiruvalluvar who preceded him by centuries in the far-away South and expressed his experiences and obsevation in an altogether different language:

> Those who have not reached (i.e who do not contemplate on) the feet of God will not swim across the vast sea of births; those who have, will. (Chapter I, No 10)

whatever he thought and taught was meant not only for Tamilians of a particular sect or calling but for all people of all ages all over the world. The divine and universal truths couched in his epigrammatic saying are there to guide us, one and all, on the path of life, and also to teach us what is fundamental and essential for leading an enlightened, elevated and benefical life. "In describing human relations and in formulating laws of success and causes of failure, he was concerned only with the essential nature of human beings and disregarded forms of faith and passing fashions of social or political behaviours. That accounts for the ring which the couplets have of eternal validity". And that too accounts for their humanitarian attiude and universal appeal as is evident from the following for instance:

1. The noblest revenge is to put the foe to the blush by our acts of kindness. (314)
2. Decision is the result of deliberation. It is harmful to rest it low. (671)

3. Hatred is a foul disease that brings discord among men. (851)
4. Out of modesty springs one's greatness. Out of humility rises the honour of family. (960)
5. The world sings in praise of those noble persons who prefer death to dishonour. (970)
6. Do not mock at others even in a sportive mood. There is virtue in being courteous even to a foe. (995)
7. The wealth that is not spent on the needy is as barren as the withering charm of a spinster. (1007)
8. Lack of decorum disgraces a home; lack of modesty destroys everything good. (1019)
9. A toiling peasant never begs but gives. (1035)
10. Poverty in itself an evil is the mother of all evils.
11. Fear and desire rule the conduct of the base. (1075)
12. To do good and to avoid evil must be the law of our being. (40)

These and hundreds of such other couplets constitute the rich and ripe advice of one who cherished nothing but the good of the entire mankind in his heart. He tried to show everyone how to lead a healthy, balanced and beneficial life, knowing fully one's duties, obligations and functions, one's place in home and society, and also one's ultimate destiny. He told them, particularly to all those who are interested in self-improvement, individual success, social harmony and global peace that:

1. Right conduct exalts one. So it should be prized above one's life. (131)
2. Good conduct is the spring of happiness. Bad conduct leads one to misery. (138)
3. Greatness springs from one's own good conduct, preserved like the sacred honour of a woman. (974)

4. Even though very learned, those who have not learnt to conduct themselves in harmony with the world (of the great) are unwise men indeed. (140)

Guru Nanak also exhorted men in a similar spirit.He placed individual conduct before the ritual and laid great emphasis on its moral as well as practical aspects, especially on good deeds and cardinal virtues of love and truth, charity and rithteousness, peace and reconciliation, good company and fellow-feeling, humility and selfless service of mankind. He told everybody as clearly as was possible, that:

> Everyone is answerable to God. No one is saved but for his good deeds.[15]

and that:

> Hereafter, man's words and deeds are scrutinised and he is brought to account for them.[16]

Rejecting the idea of intercession and priestly mediation, he asserted that there was no room for the recommendation or help of the intermediaries at the time of such a high-level impartial scrunity in God's court:

> Man has. himself to bear the consequences of his good and bad actions.[16a]

If at all the preceptor interceds, he will do so "only if one lives not on another's due"[17] and leads a truthful disciplined life. He, therefore, forewarned one and all that

> Man himself reaps the fruit of the good and the bad he does.[18]

and that

> Everyone is himself responsible for his actions, and shall have to settle his account himself.[19]

Laying a special stress on the notion of retribution, and cautioning all, he said

we gather the fruit of the deeds we plant.[20]

and

> He who indulges in greed, avarice and falsehood, reaps only what he sows.[21]

In order to gather the desired good fruit and also to look forward to getting an honourable place hereafter, he advised fellow-creatures to serve their fellow-beings, selflessly and dedicatedly:-[22a]

> If we want to get a seat in the court of God, we should dedicate ourselves to the service of the people in this world.[22]

4

His teachings were confined thus, to no particular person or place, time or sphere, sect or status, age or sex, country or community. They meant, equally and eminently, for the people of all ages, all lands, all races and all creeds. These are hence "of supreme significance", according to Mujeeb, "not only in the religious history of India but also that of the world."[23]

These are hightly significant in another aspect too. The Teacher in Nanak, just like Valluvar, did not pronounce them from any pulpit, platform or broadcasting-house. He did neither impart them while sitting in a monastry and sermonising to those who ever happened to come that way. On the other hand, he himself went all his way to the distant lands out-of-the-way places in order to convey these personally in his own words and also to demonstrate them practically through his own actions.

He himself went out to teach them even the basic moral values of life, as he was convinced that the basis of spiritual life, the source of individual betterment and social welfare is ethical conduct and moral strength. "One who seeks deliverance must cast out his pride, free himself from lust and anger, refuse to be caught up in greed and covetousness, and regard pain and hunger as the gift of the Beneficient One."[24]. He was sure, therefore, that the sweet and the humble, the patient and the faithful, the pure and the sincere, the active and the co-operative alone could realise Truth, approach the Lord and enjoy the bliss of His Union; for,

> Truth is contained in the truly-cleaned vessel; and a few indeed are blessed with such a vessel of clean conduct.[25]

He similarly "realised that all greatness, individual and national, was at base moral and morality derived its eternal sanctions from the Unity of Man and God which true religion alone could rightly teach."[26] Definig an ideal, religious or holy man, he is said to have stated, therefore

> Rescognise him as holy in whom are to be found friendship, sympathy, pleasure at the welfare of others and dislike of evil company.

In the *first* place, the intentions of holy men are pure. *Secondly*, they are pleased on hearing the praises of others. *Thirdly*, holy men serve the virtuous. *Fourthly*, they honour those who can impart to them learning and good counsel. *Fifthly*, as there is a periodical craving for food or intoxicants, so they feel a craving for the Guru's Word and for divine knowledge. *Sixthly*, they love their wives and renounce other women. *Seventhly*, they avoid subjects from which quarrels may arise. *Eighthly*, they serve those who are superior to themselves in intelligence or devotion. *Ninthly*, even if strong, they are not arrogant, and trample not on others. *Tenthly*, they abandon the society of the evil, and only associate with the holy."[27]

He, therefore, exhorted them to imbibe the divine and practical qualities, such as these, in order to justify their existence and to qualify themselves for the desired peace and perfection[27a] here and herafter:

1. Sweetness and humility are the essence of all virtues and good qualities.[28]
2. Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is the truthful living.[29]
3. Why should we exert ourselves to do evil when we ourselves have to bear the consequences.[30]
4. Falsehood exhausts itself, truth alone prevails ultimately.[31]
5. Depriving others of their due is eating pork for a Muslim and beef for a Hindu.[32]
6. If our friends are blessed with virtues, let us share the same with them and abandon thereby our own vices.[33]

7. Abandon greed, O blind in greed, as greed is the cause of immense grief.[34]
8. Declare that you will never side with the evil-doers. Proclaim that you will ever wish the victory of the good ones.[35]
9. He who wastes his wisdom in strife, is not to be called wise.[36]
10. Man degrades himself from the human order because of his ego.[37]
11. They are the real donkeys who are proud without merit.[38]
12. The dead sustain their bond with the living through their virtuous deeds.[39]
13. We should ourselves arrange our own affairs with our own hands.[40]
14. Victory over self is victory over the world.[41]
15. The householder who gives in charity all he can afford, is as pure as the water of the Ganges.[42]
16. The heart that does not cherish Truth should be broken and remoulded.[43]
17. As borax melts gold, so do lust and wrath consume body.[44]
18. Carry good deeds for travelling expenses and leave not today's task till to-morrow.[45]
19. Why should the created be proud of his gifts when the Creator alone has the power to give?[46]
20. They who bathe their bodies and sit at leisure, cannot be called pure.[47]
21. Abandon vices, practise virtues and realise, thus, the reality of life.[48]
22. He who goes about begging for what he himself has at his home, gathers shame and reproach.[49]

23. They who seek to rule over others, are stupid and boorish.[50]
24. knowledge grows in those who seek its light fades in those who merely argue.[51]
25. They who rid themselves of their selfishness, are ever in bliss and are ever beauteous.[52]
26. Death is the privilege of the brave if they die for a noble cause.[53]

These and hundreds of such other gems of moral, spiritual and philosophical content constitute the moral code of Guru Nank as reflected in his hymns preserved, fortunately, in their original and most authentic form. Couched in simple language and homely style, and presented in a precise and direct form as these are, these were understood by the rustics and the sophisticated equally well, and their real purport did go home to them.

Their clarity and simplicity, precision and directness, conciseness and meaningfulness also went a long way in distinguishing the Master's teachings from those of his predecessors and contemporaries. As is evident, there was nothing of mystical or mythical, theoretical or ambiguous about them. He, in fact, was a Teacher of the common-folk and was at his best while cherishing their aspirations and safeguarding their interests. He, therefore, talked to them in their own idiom and taught them what to aspire and how to proceed, what to do and what not to do in a simple, direct form in an original, inimitable way. He told them, for example-

1. If the wife and husband break off, the birth of a child reunites them.[54]
2. Whoever has come must pass away; for, the turn shall come round to one and all.[55]
3. That which ripens gradually, ripens best.[56]

4. If the mind is impure, the body and the tongue also be come impure.[56a]

5. Accussed is the life which is lived only to fatten one's belly.[56b]

6. There is no other place to go to except God; and He is but one.[56c]

Tirukkural also abounds in such short and memorable sayings known for their lucidity and compression, studied variety, inimitable grace and original touch. Some of the ideas couched therein appear somewhat similar in their scope, content and expression. For, instance, according to its author, Tiruvalluvar:

> They are the Brahmans who are righteous and love all creation (ch. 3, No. 30).

According to Guru Nanak-

> He alone is a ture Brahman who grasps Brahm (God); practises meditation, discipline and self-control; and adopts contentment and right conduct as his religious observances (Slok. p. 1411).

According to Tiruvalluvar again-

It is not birth but deeds that mark men (972)

and

One is not great because of
One's birth in a noble family;
One is not low because of
One's low birth (973).

According to Guru Nanak-

> God does not mind our caste or birth. So let us learn the way of truthful living; for one's deeds proclaim one's caste and respect (Rag Prabhati, p. 1330)

Similarly, Tiruvalluvar proclaimed in the South:

> The virtue of good speech is greater than all the other good qualities found in one (641)

and

Humility and loving words are only true ornaments; Others are not (95)

Guru Nanak asserted in the North:

Sweet speech and humility are the essence of all virtues and good qualities (Rag Asa, p. 470).

The Sage of Mylapore advised people-

Be pure in mind. That is Dharma. All else is but pompous show (34).

The enlightener of Talwandi told them-

Truth is realised only through the purity of heart.
(Rag. Asa. p. 472)

They have almost similar views regarding the loving-kindness.

Whereas the author of Kural maintains:

To live a life void of love is like a withered tree bursting into leaf in barren land (78).

The founder of Sikhism claims:

Man without love is an empty shell which crumbles down and is reduced to dust (Rag. Siri, p. 62).

They have somewhat similar views on many other such basic themes, like those of Family Life, Ingratitude, Frivolous speech, Bad Company, Perseverance, Friendship, Learning and Ignorance.

5

They differ too at many places; and the difference sometimes lies in their approach to and emphasis on various aspects of one and the same subject. A remarkable example of this sort of difference is evident in their respective attitude towards the status of TRUTH as a towering virtue. According to Tiruvalluvar,

In all the scriptues we have read, there is no virtue greater than truth. (300)

According to Guru Nanak:

> Truth is the highest of all virtues, but higher still is the truthful living (Rag Siri, p. 62).

But they differ mostly and fundamentally too on a basic plank. The Kural divided as it is in 3 parts, deals with three basic objects of life, viz. Dharma (virtue), Artha (Wealth) and Kama (Pleasure). It does not touch the fourth,[57] known as the Moksa (the Final release or salvation). Guru Nanak touches this too in his moral code. "The grandeur of such a code consisted in that 'moral law within and the starry Heaven above' which filled the German thinker Kant with awe. For, the ethical ideal emphasized by Guru Nanak was the spirit of cosmic consciousness, and not a catalogue of copy-book maxims."[58] He lived in an age of political strife, spiritual degeneration and loss of moral values. He said:

> The Kali-age is a knife, kings are butchers;
> Justice hath taken wings and fled.
> In this completely dark night of falsehood
> the moon of truth is never seen to rise.
> I have become perplexed in my search;
> In the darkness I find no way.
> Devoted to pride I weep in sorrow;
> Saith Nanak, how shall deliverance be obtained?
> (Majh Ki Var, Macauliffe, Vol. p. 170).

The answer he found was:

There is no salvation without the True Word. It is only 'by meditating on the Word and repeating God's Name' that man can remain 'unaffected by the world', just as "a lotus in the water remaineth dry, as also a water fowl in the stream," (Sidh Gosht, Macauliffe, Vol.I, p. 171)

> For a diseased world, the remedy is the Name.
> (Dhanasri Chhant, Mcleod, p. 195)

One who seeks deliverance must cast out his pride, free himself from lust and anger, refues to be caugth up in greed and covetousness, and regard pain and hunger as the gift of the beneficent One (Gauri, 9; Var Ramkali, 17; Tilang, 4; Japji 25). Moral values must be made the basis of life; spiritual awakening cannot come only to mechanical observance of ritual or repetition of the Name. Ultimately it is through Divine grace (nadar) that the door of salvation is found (Japji, 4).

He to whom Thou dost show Thy grace and whom Thou dost bring to Thyself, he it is who meditates on the Name ..... He whom Thou dost bring to the Truth, he it is who attains it." (Var Malar, 28, McLeod, p. 205)

Thus the Guru establishes a link between the Divine grace and the unregenerate man's efforts to purify himself. Such efforts are possible, for, even in the unregenerate man's heart, which is filled with evil, "there dwell redeeming qualities". (Oankaru, 44. McLeod, p. 207) Religion seeks to bring out these qulaities so as to open the door of salvation.[59]

Here is Guru Nanak's message of hope for mankind; and there lies the distinctive features of his moral code, his didactic teachings which maintian:

1. If the bride strings her virtuous deeds on the thread of mind, She gathers priceless jewels within her own heart. (Waddhans.p.557)
2. Salvation comes by living the Truth. (Majh, p. 141)
3. Salvation is attained by cherishing loving devotion for God and by dwelling in humility. (Rag. Asa. p.470)
4. Good actions may procure a better frame of life, but salvation comes only through His grace. (Jap. p.2)[60]
5. He who enshrines God's Name in his mind, is emancipated even when alive (Asa. p. 412).

6. Liberation from bondage is effected by the will of God. None else has any say in it. (Jap. p. 5).

Tiruvalluvar also hints at that when he asserts in the very first chapter of his Kural: Crossing the other seas (of lust and lucre) is not possible for anyone than those who have reached (i.e. who contemplate on) the feet of the compassionate One who is an Ocean of Righteousness (NO. 8).

He, at the same, tells his fellow-beings soon after that

If one would practise righteousness without a wasted day, it would become a boulder to close the path to one's rebirth (No. 39).

And "Conducting one's life ever eschewing the quartet-envy, desire, anger and harsh words-is righteousness",[61] according to his moral code; and 'righteousness' in itself forms "the warm and woof of his entire work."[62]

6

Both, Guru Nanak and Tiruvalluvar were householders-Cum Teachers. Domestic virtue, truth, purity, humility and charity form the favourite themes of some of their finest verses.

They couched them mostly in simple and straightforward manner and in exquisite poetic form in their respective languages. While expressing their views on a vast variety of themes, they did not enter into any dogmatic or doctrinal controversies. While trying to lead men from darkness to light, evil to righteousness and mortality to immortality, they nowhere posed as the law-givers. They were true and great teachers of men who were highly fortunate in possessing their inspiring, enlightening and ever-lasting teachings right in their own words.

NOTES

1. See Vanmikanathan G., The *Tirukkural*, Tiruchirapalli - 1969,p, 10.
2. In his Foreword to *Tirukkural* published by the South India Saiva Siddhanta Works publishing Society, Madras, 1970, p. ix.

3. Dikshitar, Prof. V. R. R., *Tirukkural of Tiruvalluvar*, Madras-1949, p. vii. A-8
4. Ariell, M., in his letter to Burnouf published in the Journal Asiatique, Paris-Nov. & Dec., 1848.
5. Pope, Rev. Dr. G. U. in his Introduction to his Translation of Tirukkural, op. cit., P. xxiii.
6. But what a Man the like of whom is yet to be known to the history of mankind. He was a man whose life, according to Vaswani, "opened an era in the history of India and Asia, in the history of humanity... "At rare intervals in history", he adds, "doth appear a Man like Nanak."- Vaswani, Sadhu, T. L., "A prophet of the People", Poona, 1952, pp. 13 and 15.
7. Arjan Dev, Guru, Sri Guru, Guru Granth Sahib, Amritsar - 1604, S. G. P. C.'s Impression, Rag Ramkali, p. 938.
8. Guru Granth Sahib, op. cit., Jap. p. 7.
9. A divine preceptor, a spiritual mentor, enlightened Guide teacher.
10. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol, I, Princeton - 1963, p. 45.
11. Gurdas, Bhai, Varan Amritsar-Cir, 1600, Var NO. 24, Stanzas Nos. 2, 3 and 4.
12. Ibid., Var No. 1, Stanza No. 23, Ranbir Singh, Glimpses of the Divine Masters, New Delhi-1965, p. 141.
13. Guru Granth Sahib,op.cit. Rag Gujri, p. 504.
14. Ibid., Rag Maru, p. 1001.
15 Ibid., Rag Ramkali, p. 952.
16. Guru, Granth Sahib, op. cit. Rag Asa. p. 464.
16a. Ibid., Rag Asa, p. 471.
17. Ibid., Rag Majh. p. 141.
18. Ibid., Rag Asa, p. 471.
19. Ibid., Rag Asa p. 473.
20. Ibid., Rag Asa, p. 468.
21. Ibid., Slok Varan ton Vadhik, p. 1411.
22a. According to Valluvar, "Deeds (out of a sense) of duty do not need any recompense, What does the world do in return to the rain clouds?"

(No. 211); and "All the wealth acquired by the worthy by great toil, is for doing service to the world"(No. 212).

22. Ibid., Rag Siri, p. 26.
23. Mujeeb, in his Foreword to Shan's *Guru Nanak in his Own Words*, op. cit., p. xi.
24. Banerjee, Dr. Anil Chandra, in his *introduction to Guru Nanak's Moral Code* by Shan, Dr. Harnam Singh, Chandigarh-1969, p. 6.
25. Guru Granth Sahib op. cit., Rag Sorath, p. 597.
26. Mohan Singh, Dr., Sri Guru Nanak Dev., op. cit., pp. 7-8.
27. See macauliffe, M.A., *The Sikh Religion*, London 1909; reprint, Delhi - 1966, Vol. I, pp. 136-37.

27-a. According to the holy Valluvar too universal love, sense of shame, philanthropic munificence, the indulgent look, truthfulness-these five are the pillars on which perfection of character rests". (983) And that "The touchstone of perfection of character is acknowledging defeat even at the hands of those who are not one's equals." (986).

28. Guru Granth Sahib, op. cit., Rag Asa. p. 470.
29. Ibid., Rag Siri, p. 62.
30. Ibid., Rag Siri, p.474.
31. Ibid., Rag Ramkali, p.953, 244, Ibid., Rag Majh, p. 141.
32.
33. Guru Granth Sahib. Ibid., Rag Siri, p. op. cit., Rag Suhi, p. 766.
34. Ibid., Rag Asa, p.419.
35. Ibid., Slok Varanton Vadhik, p. 1410.
36. Ibid., Rag Sarang, p. 1245.
37. Ibid., Rag Asa p. 459.
38. Ibid., Slok Varan ton Vadhik, p. 1411.
39. Ibid, Rag Majh, p. 143.
40. Ibid., Rag Asa, p. 474.
41. Ibid., Jap, p. 6.
42. Ibid., Rag Ramkali, p. 952.
43. Ibid., Rag Majh, p. 146.
44. Ibid., Rag Ramkali, p. 932.

45. Ibid., Rag Sorath, p. 595.
46. Ibid., Rag Siri, P. 25.
47. Ibid., Rag Asa, p. 472.
48. Ibid., Rag Asa, p. 418.
49. Ibid., Rag Ramkali, p. 903.
50. Ibid., Rag Basant, p. 1169.
51. Ibid., Rag Malar, p. 1255.
52. Ibid., Rag Malar, p. 1281.
53. Ibid., Rag Vadhans, p. 579.
54. Guru Granth Sahib, op. cit. Rag Majh, p. 143.
55. Ibid., Rag Asa, p. 474.
56. Ibid., Rag Tukhuri, p. 1109.
56a. Ibid., Rag Siri, p. 55.
56b. Ibid., Rag Suhi, p. 790.
56c. Ibid., Rag Siri, p. 60.
57. Which are enumerated as such as in the 26th Sloka of the Hitopadesa.
58. See Shan, Dr. Harnam Singh, Guru Nanak's Moral Code, Chandigar, 1969.
59. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
60. Guru Granth Sahib, op. cit. pp. 557, 141, 470, 2, 412, & 5.
61. Tiruvalluvar, The Tirukkural, chapter 4, No. 35.
62. Vanmikanathan, The Tirukkural, op. cit. p. xxi.

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14

Tirukkural and its unique place in Indian Literature

Vedam Venkataraya Sastry

The greatness of Tirukkural in the history of Indian literature, nay, in that of world literature cannot be over-estimated. It occupies a unique place both as a book of morals and an excellent piece of poetic composition. Though I wanted to confine myself to its Telugu translations and similar works in Telugu literature, I felt called upon, after going deeper into the book, that the subject needs wider treatment by its very innate universal appeal. As much is said of its poetic excellence I confine myself here to the first part of my statement, i.e. Kural as a book of morals.

Modern scholars, in their enthusiasm and admiration to the great teacher, are not tired of calling the book a religious one, and a moral code. They call it the Tamil Veda, Tamil Bible, Tamil Koran and so on at the same time emphasising on its secular character and universal appeal standing above all sectarian and racial-prejudices. These statements sound contradictory and sometimes make one feel that they are the outcome of confused thinking. Religious views seldom rise above the prejudices of sect, caste, creed or nationality and humanity at present is, on this basis, divided into airtight compartments making cultural

contacts and emotional integrity difficult, if not impossible. From my humble cursory glance of this great book I do not find anything religious about it. By religion I mean anything about God and other worldliness. There is nothing otherworldly in it and the author appears to have had no mind to teach his readers any practical way to realise God or find happiness in heaven at the end of this life on earth. He definitely wants us to realise actual facts around us in the mundane earth, strive to be happy in this birth in our present condition of flesh and blood and live a clean life without quarrels, differences and even small bickerings. He does not worry about God without being atheistic at the same time. He wants us to pray to God and be good but make no fuss about religiosity.

A cursory glance at the plan of his book confirms the above view. The treatise is divided into three parts usually knows as Dharma, Artha and Kama (அறம் - பொருள் - இன்பம்) and as we have no proper English equivalent words we can just be satisfied by translating these as Virtue, Wealth and family life. Dharma is a very wide one. It may be called duty and man's duties are innumerable. He is bound by birth to behave in a particular way to his neighbours and react in a particular way to his surroundings. After praising God and mentioning of the blessings of rain, merit of ascetics and power of virtue he dilates upon domestic and ascetic virtues. About domestic virtue married life and the happiness of a householder are made much of. Stress is laid on hospitality, gratitude, self-control, fear of sin and one's own duty to society. Regarding ascetic virtue non-violence, non-killing, abstinence from flesh-eating and compassion are emphasised. All this shows that one should try to be as good as possible in every walk of life, as agreeable as possible to society and nature. In the second book or division he has taken up the state. From Domestic economy, if I can say so, he has gone to political economy. Herein he has prescribed a code of conduct for the rulers of a country. He has divided the state into seven parts, the King, the Minister or ministers, territory, fort, treasury, army and finally a friend of good advisor. This is exhaustive and includes

everything required for politics and political economy. The last part or book devoted to இன்பம் (Kama or love). He advises young men and women just trying to understand the world to proceed in the proper path. Love is the most important factor in the life of a boy or a girl and any false step is enough to make the entire life of a person miserable. A boy or a girl has to think twice and choose well one's own partner in life. Proper advice is necessary at the stage of adolescence. Herein the great author is at his best in analysing human psychology and guiding humanity. Hence we find no advice given to anybody to become only God-minded. He does not ask us 'Bhaja Govindan' or say 'Namacha Sivaya' or 'Buddham Saranam Gachcami'. He simply says 'You have many things to learn on earth, learn them and be happy.'

Now coming to the life and times of Tiruvalluvar much controversy has to be faced. No doubt he lived some two thousand years ago at the fag end of the third Sangam but his life history is surrounded my mystery. More stories are current that he was a weaver and was living at Mylapore, or that he was a royal drummer or civil servant of a low origin and his wife Vasuki was a devoted wife. Whatever these stories expects us to believe one thing is clear that he did not belong to any high class in life and was one among the masses well acquainted with life and its different aspects. Some are of the opinion that Valluvar was not his personal name and denotes the office he held under the state. If this view were to be correct we can safely equate the term Valluva with Vallava or Vallabha of the Asokan and later inscriptions contemporaneous with the Sangam periods. Inscriptions say... so and so king orders thus - 'mautri, purohita, samanta, amatya, ayuktaka, nigeektaka, adhikarika, mahattaran sakala naiyogika Vallabhan ittham ajnapayati. Here the term Vallabha denotes an officer. Whether it is Sanskrit term or a Dravidian one is not to the point but the term is found in use. As in later history many ministers and persons holding high posts in the service of the state are found as poets and writers it is not unlikely that Tiruvalluvar was in state service like Sekkilar of a later stage and wrote his book.

It is also curious to note that the famous author of Panchatantra, Vishnu Sarma, also lived at Mylapore a city that has great antiquity. Panchatantra mentions the place "aste Dakshinaya Janapade Mahilaropyam nama nagaram." Though Panchatantra is different in plan by way of its cock and bull stories it gives, the saptanga theory of state and prescribes a good moral code of conduct. It, of course, has no chapter on love. As Panchatantra is slightly later than the Sangam period it is likely that Vishnu Sarma was influenced by Tirukkural and made certain parts easy for the public, of course writing in Sanskrit. I would like to make one point clear. Whatever the language the thought was Indian for the great Artha Sastra of Kautilya was already in the field. Its date being 300 B.C. and Chanakya is also said to be a southern Brahmin there is no doubt that whole of India was thinking alike. Later authors did not like the unscrupulous ways of Chanakya and condemned his methods as we find in Bana's Kadambari. Tiruvalluvar being impelled by his compassionate nature appears to have taken the Saptanga theory of state and modified the approach to one of ahimsa. We see much similarity between Tirukkural's second book and many works on arthasastra and definitely Tiruvalluvar has improved upon his predecessors.

In Sanskrit we find many books on Niti sastra, loka niti and rajya niti and large chapters in Mahabharata. Some authors have dealt with these separately. Many of these are considered as later interpolations into the Mahabharata. If Tiruvalluvar was influenced by contemporary thought on these two aspects loka niti அறம் rajya niti, பொருள் his காமத்துப்பால் is a forerunner of Vatsyayana's Kamasastra as his date is given as about the fourth century A.D. The greatness of Tiruvalluvar lies in this that he has felt that these subjects be better taken together and not studied separately. It is really very interesting to note that the great Sanskrit poet Bhartrihari has written his Subhashita on the same plan of Tiruvalluvar - Sringara, Niti and Vairagya satakas. One may deny the similarity that rajaniti is wanting and Vairagya

that has no place in Tirukkural has a special chapter. The division is significant though with this difference. Tiruvalluvar's is a comprehensive view without Vairagyam.

There is a view that Thiruvalluvar was a Jain and was no other than the great Elacharya or Kunda Kundacharya (eg. Kundavai), the first pontif of the Jaina Sangham that was established at Madurai about 450 A.D. Though stress is laid on ahimsa we do not find any special Jaina philosophy. But coming in line with great architects of India who raised wonderful gopurams but kept their names secret, or wanted no publicity. Tiruvalluvar believed in service and no public recognition or title. That was his spirit.

Many want to equate Tiruvalluvar with some saints of a later age. But there are no miracles attributed to him and he was no Vedantist. Nor was he a Yogi like Vemana. Vemana criticised his contemporary society bitterly and heaped abuses against the so called orthodox. He had a large number of disciples. But Tiruvalluvar aimed no abuse against his contemporaries so strongly. His criticism was mild. The satakas of later Telugu literature contain many ideas of Kural but on a small scale. To compare Kural with the didactic literature will be interesting to show more the differences that the similarities. The writings of Vemana or other saints show their dissatisfaction with society whereas Tiruvalluvar has no grievance against anybody and appears to have been in cheerful mood. It is really unfortunate that Sanskrit thought was not influenced by his example of putting Dharma, Artha and Kama in a nutshell.

The reason for Valluvar omitting to write on Moksha in a separate chapter is noteworthy. There are side remarks and references to heavenly bliss but there they end. His period was one of religious strife. Buddhism and Jainism, Hinduism and local cults, Saivism and Vaishnavism, Christianity in some parts were all there. There was no common platform for these to meet and agree. To mention a particular approach to salvation,

Sivabhakti or Vishnubhakti would mar the secular character of his work. I think he very wisely avoided unpleasant controversy by ignoring the chapter. It is also likely that moksha is automatically assured if one follows the other three properly as it is more in the nature of a reward for good way of life than a way of living itself. It is a reward or phala for karma or action.

Though there is no Sanskrit translation or adaptation of this great Book, Telugu has the unique honour of being the earliest in Indian languages to have a translation. Indian translations were made earlier. The first Telugu translation was made in 1877 with elaborate notes by Venkatrama Srividyanandaswami of the Kanuparti family. He called it Trivarga Dipika. In 1892 Sri Sakkam Narasimhalu Naidu translated selection called Trivargamu. In 1906 another translation of selection was made by one Sri C. Lakshminarayana Sastry. The famous poet and translator of Kambaramayana into Telugu, the late Sri P. Sriramulu Reddi published his translation in 1948. My friend Challa Radhakrishna Sarma published his as Tamila Vedamu in 1954. In 1955 Sri Jalayya published it as Nitisudha. Recently in 1966 another friend of mine, Sri Sonti Sripati Sastry published his translation as Sri Padula. Having lived in Tamilnad together with the Tamils the Andhras also share the feelings of the Tamils and welcome any number of translations with pride.

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15

TAMIL LITERATURE

Kamil Veith Zvelebil

3.2.2. **Tirukkural.** 'The Sacred Kural' is undoubtedly quite exceptional as to its literary qualities among the Eighteen Shorter Works, though it has been typically evaluated rather according to the merit of its moral and instructive message than of its aesthetic values. It is a comprehensive manual of ethics, polity and love, consisting of 1330 distichs divided into 133 section of 10 couplets each, the first 38 on moral and cosmic order (aram, Skt. dharma), the next 70 on political skill and social behaviour (porul, Skt. artha), and the rest on pleasure (kamam, Skt. Kama). The author was probably a Jain with eclectic learning and good knowledge of the early works of Tamil poetry as well as of the Sanskrit gnomic and legal texts. We have no authentic information on his life.[1] Even his name Tiruvalluvar is not quite clear to us.[2] A date of the work sometime between A.D.400 - 500 may be the best we can at this moment suggest.[3] Hindus, Jains and Christians have claimed this highly esteemed and prestigious work for themselves. The ethics of Tirukkural is a reflection of the Jaina moral code, and its theology, if we can at all speak of any, reflects rather Jaina doctrines than anything else.[4] There has been much speculation why there is no specific portion devoted to the fourth basic objective of life, vitu (Skt.

moksa 'deliverance'), while virtue, wealth and pleasure are dealt with in detail. It seems that the main reason consists in the nature of Tiruvalluvar's moral code which has eminently empirical, pragmatic, even practical.[5]

As a work of literary art, Tirukkural reveals a single structural plan and looks like the work of a single master. The whole book employs one kind of metre, perfectly suited to didactic poetry, the kuralvenpa, lit. 'the short vel stanza' whose properties are: only feet of two or three metrical units (acai) may be used; the stanza must always end in a foot of the type - , =, ... or ....; strict rules of a particular consonance of lines (ventotai) must be observed; the number of feet is seven, the number of lines two, the first line consisting usually of four feet, the second of three. Illustration:

kannutaiya renpavar karror mukattirantu

punnutaiyar kalla tavar

- = - / - = / - - / = = -

- = - / - - / =

The learned men alone are said to have eyes:

the unlearned have but a pair of sores in their face.

The "rhyme" (etukai) occurs in the coda of the first syllable: kann- / punn-. Observe how intimately the formal properties and the content are connected: kan "eye(s)" and pun "sore(s)" are placed in the most prominent slots in the lines and bear the "rhyme" because these two words express the contrast between learning and ignorance; on the other hand, the alliteration (monai) occurs in kannutaiya and karror, connecting these two words formally: it is the learned (karror) who have eyes (kan).

This formal excellence and the eminently suitable metre are responsible for what H.A. Popley describes as "the terse, vivid couplets" which "lend themselves so aptly to memorisation and quotation."[6] I have tired to show elsewhere[7] that the content

of Tirukkural is patterned and that no `structural gaps' occur in the text. Every distich has as it were two kinds of meaning: its own intrinsic and isolate meaning, and the additional structural meaning in relation to other couplets and to the entire text which forms a perfect total structure. One should never contemplate the couplets in isolation. They have true validity and meaning only in their patterned relations with other couplets: the relevant context concerns, first, the 133 decades of couplets (referred to as atikaram `chapter'), second, the three portions (pal), and, ultimately, the whole book; also, the decades complement each other, e.g. decade 56 on tyranny complements decade 55 on the `right sceptre' and 57 on the absence of tyranny. In short, Tirukkural is no anthology of isolated aphorisms. If no replacement of any semantic element, however small, will do in a text where a single alteration will transform or destroy it, how can one expect to have an adequate translation? To quote H.A. Popley again: "It is impossible in any translation to do justice to the beauty and force of the original."[8]

Man in totality of his relationships to God, to fellow-men is society, and to woman in the intimacy of the family, is the *sujet* of Tirukkural. As such, the book was called "the living ethics of love," a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom that any other like it hardly exists in world-literature;[9] "the first of works, from which, whether for thought or language, there is no appeal";[10] "the best... Tamil work of any extent which is now in existence".[11] C. and H. Jesudasan, in their book on Tamil literature, are somewhat off the mark when they say that "literary charm, it is too wellknown, is an indefinable, inexplicable quality."[12] It is on the contrary quite obvious wherein lies the literary charm of the Tirukkural: in the skillful use of the suitable metre, in the careful over-all structural plan, in the double meaning of the couplets referred to above. It is, of course, primarily a book of ideas and ideals. However, poems are made not of ideas but of words. This dictum of Mallarme cuts deep when applied to Tirukkural. For even

this undoubtedly greatest of the Tamil didactic texts is not, according to my opinion. a supreme work of, art.[13] First of all, there are banalities and platitudes even in the Kural, and sometime not the slightest attempt has been made by the poet to strife after poetic charm.[14] Second, measured by the 'loftiness' of its ideas, the Kural is sometimes, thought not too often, a book of shrewd cunning, and not only of justice, kindness, friendship.[15] If there is true poetry anywhere in the book it will be found among the erotic couplets of its third part, because there the teacher, the preacher in Valluvar has stepped aside, and the poet speaks almost the language of the superb love-poetry of the classical age.[16] Occasionally, we find great and striking similes and metaphors: love is more tender than an opening flower (1289); the base, like sugarcane, will profit those who bruise (1078); the grievous plague of enmity (853) is a fine metaphor, just like eye wet with the dew of tears (1232) and the comparison of happy love to a sea of joy (1232). However, Tiruvalluvar's aim was not art and poetry as such; he was a teacher; not art but wisdom, justice, morals are his objectives. This "bard of universal man" is emphatically not "the greatest poet of South India" as Pope calls him. It is not true that he "has made every maxim a beautiful verse of wonderful poetry."[17] On the whole, though, when taken as an integrated vision of man and his duties and pleasures, the Kural is a great book of sentences, and one may agree with Pope when he says that Tiruvalluvar has touched "all things with poetic grace"; this poetic grace is unmistakably perceptible even in the translations of which a few samples from the pen of Pope, Popley and V.V.S. Aiyar are given here:[18]

"The flute is sweet, the lute is sweet," say those Who've never heard
the pretty prattle of their little ones (66, Popley)

The living soul subsists in love;

The Loveless are but skin and bone. (80, Popley)

The vile, maybe, are like the gods

They, too, just do as they desire.

If farmers quiet sit and got not to their land,

"Twill sulk and take the huff, like sulking wife."(1039, Popley)

I never knew Death before: I know it now: it wareth the form of a woman and hath large and battling eyes. (1083, V.V.S. Aiyar)

She is simple and gracious, but yet her eyes are versed in the ways of waging war; for they drink the lives of those that look on her. (1084, V.V.S. Aiyar)

Is it by her fair forehead that my manhood is overcome, the manhood that causeth to tremble even those that have not yet faced me on the battle-field? (1088, V.V.S. Aiyar)

A double witchery have glances of her liquid eyes;
One glance is glance that brings me pain; the other heals again.
(1091, Pope)

Withdraw, it burns; approach, it soothes the pain;
Whence did the maid this wondrous fire obtain?
(1104, Pope)

My solution of the question how to translate the Kural would be to translate as briefly and tersely as possible, preferably not in rhymed couplets, e.g.

A is the beginning of all letters;
the Primeval Lord is the beginning of the world. (1)

The joy of the avenger lasts but a day;
the fame of the forgiver lasts forever. (156)

They are great who fast and do penance.
They are greater who forgive injuries. (160)

The pleasure of love is wide as ocean.
Wider still is the sorrow of parting. (1166)

The passion of love is stronger than wine:
the very thought of it intoxicates. (1201)

NOTES

1. There are number of conflicting traditions and many legends about the poet: He is supposed to have been an issue of a union between a Brahman and a Pariah woman, the brother of Kapilar and Auviayar, belonging to Mylapore, or to Maturai. Some think that he was a weaver by caste.

2. The name was equated with vallabha - a superintendent to the king, cf. Mu. Irakavaiyankar, Arayccittokuti, 2nd ed. 1964, pp.206-9. Cf. however DED 4354 Ta. valluvan a Pariah caste, the members of which are royal drummers and priests for Paraiyas. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai thinks that the poet was "the chief of the proclaiming boys analogous to a trumpet - major of the army" (History of Tamil Language and Literature, p.80). G.U. Pope calls the poet "The Weaver of Mayilapur."

3. Cf. K.V. Zvelebil, Tamil Lit. (Handbuch).

4. Cf. the epithes for god in Tirukkural 3, 4, 6, 8, 9 which have a strong Jaina flavour; the Jains have claimed Tiruvalluvar as their authority already in the 16th cent.; the great importance given to kollamai 'non-killing', and to vegetarianism (cf. Tirukkural) 321-33, 251-60) is typically Jaina. Cf. K.V. Zvelebil, Tamil Lit, (Handbuch), ftn. 86 to Chapter VII.

5. According to Pope, the people of Tiruvalluvar's time were "not prepared for the higher teaching" of liberation (moksa) - a ridiculously naive statement.

6. H.A. Popley, The Sacred Kural, Calcutta and London, 1931, p.32.

7. K. Zvelebil, The Smile of Murugan, pp.158-67.

8. H.A. Popley, The Sacred Kural, p.x.

9. A. Schweitzer, Indian Thought and its Development, London 1951, pp.200-205.

10. Drew's Preface to the Kural, Vol.I., p.2.

11. R. Caldwell's Comparative Grammar, Introduction, p.85. Cf. also his praise: "Nothing certainly in the whole compass of human language can equal the force and terseness of the sententious distichs in which the author conveys the lessons of wisdom he utters" (P. Percival's land of the Veda, p.110). In Tiruvalluvamalai we find the following stanza ascribed to Vannakkancarranar: "It is difficult to say whether Sanskrit (ariyam) or Tamil (centamil) is the best; they are perhaps on a par, since Sanskrit possesses the Veda, and Tamil the Kural composed by the divine Valluvan."

12. A History of Tamil Literature, p.48.

13. It is still almost a heresy to express this opinion; but it was expressed even by some Tamil critics, notably by K.N. Subramanyam.

14. E.g.34: Be pure in mind, for that true Virtue is; All else is merely sound and sham. Or 582: Each day, of every subject every deed, "This duty of the king to learn with speed. Or 584: His officers, his friends, his enemies, All these who watch are trusty spies. The original text is equally banal and poor as the translations of Popley and Pope."

15. Cf.759: Make money! Foeman's insolence o'ergrown / To lop away no keener steel is known (Pope). Or 879: Destroy the thorn, while tender point can work thee no offence, Matured in time, 'twill pierce the hand that plucks it thence (Pope).

16. Here it is necessary to stress that Tiruvalluvar's conception of eros is utterly different from the treatment of sex in any of the Sanskrit kamasastras. Love, in Tirukkural, is an exalting passion pictured as ideal love in the dramatic situations according to the ancient akam conventions; the work of Vatsyayana and of other Sanskrit authors is sastra, that is, objective, scientific analysis of sex.

17. T.P. Meenakshisundaram, The Pageant of Tamil Literature, Madras 1966, p.19.

18. Tirukkural has been translated into a number of languages (cf. K.V. Zvelebil, Tamil Lit. (Handbuch), ftn. 99 to Chapter VII). The translation of the text was initiated by Western scholars in the beginning of the 18th Century. The first two parts of the text were first translated into Latin by Beschi in 1730. When Ariel, published his French translation of the third part in 1848, he referred to another French version attempted by about 1767. In 1794, Kindersley translated some of the couplets into English. The most important translations into English, German, French, Russian and Swedish: F.W. Ellis, ca. 1819 in madras (without title-page or date), republished by R.P. Sethu Pillai as Tirukkural, Ellis' Commentary, Madras 1955; W.H. Drew, The Kural of Tiruvalluvar, I, 1840, II, 1852; republished with the translation of J. Lazarus, Madras 1949; J. Lazarus, The Kural of Tiruvalluvar, Madras, 1885; G.U. Pope, the 'Sacred' Kural of Tiruvalluva-Nayanar, London 1886; V.V.S. Aiyar, Thiruvalluvar; The Kural, or the maxims of Thiruvalluvar, 1915 (2nd ed. 1925, 3rd 1951, 4th 1961); H.A. Popley, The Sacred Kural, the Tamil Veda of Tiruvalluvar, Calcutta 1937 (2nd ed. 1958); M.S. Purnalingam Pillai, The Kural in English, with foreword. Footnotes and Appendix, Tirunelveli 1942; V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, Tirukkural in Roman Transliteration with English Translation, Madras 1949. A set of translations of the text published by the South Indian Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras 1958, includes the versions of Pope, Ellis, Drew and Lazarus. German: August Friedrich Cammerer, Das Tiruwalluvar, Gedichteund Denkspruche, Nurnberg 1803, 176 p.; a

few couplets by F. Ruckert (1847); K. Graul, Der Kural des Tiruvalluver, London - Leipzig 1856. French: Apart from partial translations by Ariel (1848), Dumast (1854), Lamairesse (1867), Jacolliot (1876), G. Barrigue De Fontainieu (1889), Gnanou-Diagou, Tirouvallouvar, Koural, Pondicherry 1942. Russian: J.J. Glazov, Moskva 1963. Swedish: Ingve Frykholm, Tirukkural, i svensk tolkning, uddevalla 1971. Tirukkural has also been translated, completely or partially, into Sanskrit, Hindi, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Bengali, Urdu, Gujarati, Burmese, Malay, Chinese, Fijian, Latin and Polish. Cf. also A. Thirumalaimuthuswamy, A Bibliography of Thirukkural, Madurai 1962; M.S. Purnalingam Pillai, Critical Studies in Kural, Munnirpalam 1929; A.S. Duraiswamy Pillai, An Introduction to the Study of Tiruvalluvar, Madurai 1961; Tirukkural Lectures 1959-60 to 1968-9, University of Madras, Madras 1971. There are innumerable editions, most valuable among them those of W.H. Drew (1840-52), K. Graul (1865), G.U. Pope (1886), V.R.R. Dikshitar (1949), R.P. Sethu pillai - F.W. Ellis (1955) and U.Ve.Vai.Mu. Kopala Krusnamacaryar (4th ed. 1965). The best commentary is that of Parimelalakar (13th - 14th cent.).

TAMIL LITERATURE
Wiesbaden, 1974, PP. 119-123.

16

CONCEPT OF KINGSHIP IN KURAL AND EPICS

Prof. A.S. Gnanasambandan

To discuss in full the concept of Kingship in Kural would be beyond the limited scope of this paper and hence I restrict it to the discussion of the Divine Right Theory of Kingship. The paper will try to show whether Kural has envisaged the Divine Right Theory and if so how the later day epics follow it.

The conception of statehood and king has a later day origin when compared to the dawn of civilization. It can be said without cause for dispute that the concept of Kingship is perhaps oldest in world history. The Tamil word KOON indicating a king, is perhaps a clue to understand how the concept of Kingship came into existence in this part of the country. Possession of cattle was considered to be the symbol of power of an individual. This is true of Sangam days also.

In Sangam literature and in Tolkappiyam, the oldest available Tamil grammar, we find that wars between kings were started by lifting cattle. Unless it was thought that by lifting cattle the economic power of one could be destroyed there was no point in lifting cattle. Tolkappiyam deals extensively with the method of warfare all starting with cattle - lifting, but it is curiously silent about the king and polity.

It is significant to note that Kural deals with war in four chapters but in different places. வலி அறிதல், காலமறிதல், இடனறிதல் (to find out the strength of the enemy, to chose the time and place of war) are dealt with as one unit, but படைமாட்சி (the war - worthiness of fighters) is dealt with some 27 chapters later.

The fact that படைமாட்சி is dealt along with நாடு (country) அரண் (fortress) and பொருள் செய் வகை (sources of revenue) leads one to think that the army of the king was mainly intended as a defensive force and not for offence or aggression. Even though the army is given a place of pride amongst the six limbs of the King in the first Kural in porutpaal', Valluvar seems to think that the army even though is the backbone of the king is mainly intended as a defence weapon.

This concept perhaps goes against the ancient convention that king should be aggressive and should not hesitate to annex neighbour's domain. Puram speaks like this in stanza No.8.[2] Artasastra and western writers like Machiavelli speak gloriously of this trait to be found in a king. It is surprising that Kural does not speak of aggressiveness in a king at any place. This aspect which even though goes against the earlier tradition, is being faithfully followed.

In Cilampu the king goes on an expedition to get a stone from the Himalayas for the statue of Kannaki. Incidentally he wages war with those who did not subscribe to his view. One important point to be noted here is that the Pandiya and Chola kings do not approve of the Cera King's action in going on an aggressive expedition. Reference is specifically made in the Ramayana that Dasarata never went on a war with aggression in his mind.

In Cintamani also we do not come across a single instance where a war of aggression was conducted by Jivakan, even though he had to fight several battles to get back his rightful throne.

Returning to the Divine Right Theory which is made much of by others Kural does not seem to accept that, inspite of the fact it gives the name IRAI இறை to the king. Kural 388[3] says that a king who administers Justice to his subjects and protects them will be looked upon as a God by them. Valluvar is extremely careful in this stanza to use the word 'வைக்கப்படும்' (will be considered as God).

Valluvar is quite aware of the fact that God (இறை) has that Godhood (இறைத் தன்மை) as a permanent attribute to Himself and it is not something which is given by some one to some other individual. Having known this Kural says 'இறை என்று வைக்கப்படும்'. There is no Godhood in the King but if he behaves as expected of him he will be looked upon as God. This is a characteristic of the king for which he must work hard and attain and hence it is not a natural or permanent attribute to him. As long as he rules properly he will be looked upon as God but the moment he loses that character he will lose his godhood (இறைத்தன்மை).

This clearly indicates that he was not born with any divine right to rule the people.

If we accept Parimelalagar's (Commentator's) view[4] that the king is called Irai because he was worldly representative of God to men, Kural No. 389[5] will go against this view. Kural 389 says that a king who tolerates bitter advice from others will have this world under him. By stating that bitter advice may be required occasionally and that it was the duty of the king who wants to retain his throne to listen to it, Valluvar rings death knell to the Divine Right Theory. This idea is alien to the Divine Theory according to which the king shall never go wrong.

My learned friend Thiru N. Murugesa Mudaliar in his illuminating talk on "Polity in Tirukkural"[6] while agreeing with the fact that Kural does not endow any divinity to kingship goes on to add that a first King possesses a divine light (ஒளி). This word ஒளி occurs in three Kurals 390, 698 and 556 in connection with the king. No doubt the word ஒளி has divine

light as one of its meanings. There are other meanings also for that word. In Kural it is used in the normal sense which means name. Name ஒளி according to literature of those days is earned and fame (புகழ்) comes after one's death.

In Kural No. 653[7] the word ஒளி is used in this meaning of name. It says one should abstain from doing things that will spoil one's name. Kural 556[8] also suggests the same meaning. It says that as long as a king is just he will have name; and the moment he becomes unjust his fair name will disappear. Naladiyar also states the same meaning in stanza No.9. The meaning[9] there is more clear because the words ஒளி and புகழ் are used in contrastive distribution, thereby bringing out the meaning of name and fame.

From the above statements one can safely come to the conclusion that Kural inspite of the commentators does not envisage divine right to the kings. Tolkappiyam in the entire Purattinaiiyal does not speak a word about the divine right of kings. It deals mostly with the various kinds of war.

If so then how did this divine business enter into Tamil literature? The first Tamil epic Cilappatikaram refers to the divine right in an oblique way.

Prof. Spellman classifies 12 different gradations of kingly divinity.[10] Of them we are interested in a few. For instance No.3 states that "All kings are divine" and No.8 states "Institute of Kingship is divine". Cilampu refers to Ceran Cenguttuvan in the following lines.

அரைசாள் செல்வத்து நிரைதார் வேந்தர்
(கட்டுரை - 142)

அரைசு வீற்றிருக்கும் திருப்பொறி உண்டு.
(வரந்தரு - 175)

According to Prof. Spellman No.12 states that the "king is a special concern of God's" which finds an echo in Cilampu in the following lines:

3. ஆனேறு உயர்த்தோன் அருளின் தோன்றி,
மாநிலம் விளக்கிய மன்னவ.... (வரந் - 141)

One can easily see that the three Tamil quotations are so similar to Spellman's classification and hence we are driven to conclude that the divine right which was foreign to Valluvar slowly crept into Tamil literature even during the time of Cilampu.

Eulogizing the kings was common during the Sangam age but to extol him as the ultimate was rather rare even there. In one of the Puram[11] stanzas the king is compared to the life of the people. It is a sort of hyperbole where the poet says "the world does not exist because of rice, or water but because of the King. Hence a powerful King should always feel that he is the life of the people".

One can feel that the divinity business was in an embryo form during the Sangam Period, which was discountenanced by Valluvar, but slowly crept into Tamil literature during the time of Cilampu. But there also it is not so prominent. I feel there was a real cause for this new appreciation of the Kings and their role in Tamilnad after the Kalabhra interregnum. For nearly three centuries the Tamils were suffering under the yoke of foreigners, the Kalabhras. They were anxiously waiting for the time when one of their own Kings would put an end to this misrule by the aliens. After Pandiyan Kadungon, slowly the yoke of foreign rule was lifted and a sigh of relief was felt throughout Tamilnad.

Bakti period came into existence and Alwars thought whoever released the Tamils and their religion must be a God on earth. To help them to think so the mythological stories of Tirumal, where he fought with the enemies to save and rescue his son, were very handy. Moreover the function of Tirumal and the king were one and the same to destroy the enemies and to protect their people. Hence the metaphor came quite handy. Nammalwar sang that "when one sees the king it is just like seeing Tirumal".[12] When the whole of Tamilnad was suffering from foreign aggression for three centuries without any hope of

redemption, if someone were to fulfil their aspiration when they have lost all hope it is but natural that the people thought that the redeemer was not an ordinary King but an incarnation of the saviour God.

Even though this metaphor might have been used for one King in the beginning later Kings also took up the halo. Since this thought percolated from the highest to the lowest poets began to reflect this in their poems. Especially when they had to sing about Kings this metaphor came in handy.

During the time of Cintamani the divinity of the King was thought of as indisputable. Tevar went one step further to state that the King was more than the gods. In two stanzas he eulogizes the Kings in general as more than the devas.

திலக நீள்முடித் தேவரும் வேந்தரும்
உலக மாந்தர்கள் ஒப்பஎன்று ஒதுப
குலவு தார்மன்னர்க்கு யான் இது கூறுவன்
பலவு மிக்கனர் தேவரில் பார்த்திபர் (நாமகள் - 217)

(People say that the devas and the Kings are equals. I shall say to the Kings that the Kings excel the devas in many aspects.)

அருளுமேல் அரசர்க்கு மன், காயுமேல்
வெருளச் சுட்டிடும் வேந்தெனும் மாதெய்வம்
அருளி மற்றவை வாழ்த்தினும் வையினும்
அருளி ஆக்கல்; அழித்தல் அங்கு ஆபவோ?(நாமகள்-218)

(The King who is the greatest of Gods can bestow benefits if he wants or destroy if he dislikes. But the other Gods, they can only bestow benefits on those whom they love but are powerless to take back what they bestowed when once they hate.)

Sekkilar who came after Tiruttakka Tevar did not go to this extent of praising the kings as more than Gods, but at the same time accepts the divinity by stating that a country without a king is a body without life.

மன்னரை இன்றி வைகும் மண்ணுலகு எண்ணுங்காலை
இன்னுயிர் இன்றி வைகும் யாக்கையை ஒக்கும்... (மூர்த்தி - 29)

மன்னவன் தோள்இணைக் காவல் இன்றி
வாழும் தகைத்துஅன்று இந்த வையகம்... (மூர்த்தி - 28)

Having been the Prime minister of the Chola empire in its heyday probably Sekkilar thought that it is impossible for a country to exist without a king.

Kural lays more stress on the minister the king should choose. Valluvar's dictum that "Since the ministers are the eyes through which the king sees he must be careful in choosing them"[13] has not been cared for during the days of imperial Cholas. The importance which Kural gives to the ministers is spoken lightly by Sekkliar, himself a prime minister. A point to be noted is that Sekkilar was very familiar with Kural. If inspite of this he treats lightly of the ministers it reflects the time spirit during Chola days. The power of the king was unquestioned.

In Tirunavukkarasu Puranam a significant line appears. When ordering his ministers to arrest and bring Tirunavukkarasar who has deserted the state religion the Pallava King says, "you go and arrest that evil man and bring him here to be punished. Be careful not to take any bribe from him and leave him."[14]

We have seen that the divinity of the King was upheld by Ilango, Tevar and Sekkilar. Last comes the great Kamban who engineers revolution silently. We are familiar by this time with the habit of the poets in speaking of the Kings as the life and their subjects as body inanimate.

For the first time in the Tamilian thought the divine right of the king is slowly thrown overboard. But the fun is that Kamban seems to be quite wary of expressing his idea openly. He uses the same old metaphor which has been used by his predecessors but with a time twist. The stanza is worth quoting in full.

வயிரவான் பூண்அணி மடங்கல் மொய்ம்பினான்
உயிர்எலாம் தன்உயிர் ஒப்ப ஓம்பலால்

செயிர்இலா உலகினில் சென்று நின்றுவாழ்
உயிர்எலாம் உறைவதுஓர் உடம்பும் ஆயினான். (அரசியல் - 10)

(The jewel bedecked king (Dasarathan) powerful like a lion looks after all living things under him as his own life. Because of this he can be considered as a body in which all the lives dwell.)

By simply changing the organs of the metaphor he has achieved something which is a wonder even in these so called democratic days. He has said that the king is only the inanimate body which simply executes the will of the people (life).

Kamban who is soaked in Kural fully subscribes to the view of Kural when it says that "a despotic monarch who does not listen to the ministers who will hit him hard when he goes wrong will destroy himself without enemies."[15] This Kural is beautifully expressed in the following stanza where he describes the ministers of Dasaratha.

தம்உயிர்க்கு இறுதி எண்ணார்; தலைமகன் வெகுண்ட போதும்
வெம்மையைத் தாங்கி, நீதிவிடாது நின்றுஉரைக்கும்
வீரர்..... (மந்திர - 8)

In another stanza the entire Kural is made use of:

அடுக்கும், ஈது அடாது என்று, ஆன்ற அறிவுகாட்டி ஏதுவோடு
இடிக்குநர் இல்லை; உள்ளார் எண்ணியது எண்ணி, உன்னை
முடிக்குநர்; என்றபோது, முடிவுஅன்றி முடிவது உண்டோ?
(காட்சி - 136)

To conclude I may say that the Divine Right of Kingship was alien to Valluvar, but later on it slowly crept into the minds of the Tamils which is reflected in their poetry.

NOTES

1. படைகுடி கூழ்அமைச்சு நட்பு, அரண் ஆறும்
   உடையான் அரசருள் ஏறு. (குறள் 38)
2. போகம் வேண்டிப் பொதுச்சொற் பொறாஅ திடஞ்சிறி
   தென்னு மூக்கந் துரப்ப (புறம். 8)
3. முறைசெய்து காப்பாற்றும் மன்னவன் மக்கட்கு
   இறைஎன்று வைக்கப் படும். (குறள் 388)

4. உலகபாலர் உருவாய் நின்று உலகம் காத்தலின் இறை என்றார் - இறைமாட்சி முன்னுரை, பரிமேலழகர்.

5. செவிகைப்பச் சொற்பொறுக்கும் பண்புடை வேந்தன் கவிகைக்கீழ்த் தங்கும் உலகு. (குறள் 389)

6. Tirumati Sornammal Endowment lectures- Madras University Publication, Part I, English - Pages 529 and 530.

7. ஓஒதல் வேண்டும் ஒளிமாழ்கும் செய்வினை. (குறள் - 653)

8. மன்னாவாம் மன்னார்க்கு ஒளி. (குறள் 556)

9. உண்ணான், ஒளி நிறான், ஓங்கு புகழ் செய்யான். (நாலடியார் 9)

10. Sornammal Endowment Lectures - N. Murugesa Mudaliar's talk, Pages 530 - 31.

11. நெல்லும் உயிர் அன்றே நீரும் உயிர் அன்றே
மன்னன் உயிர்த்தே மலர்தலை உலகம்
யான் உயிர் என்பது அறிகை
வேல்மிகு தானை வேந்தற்குக் கடனே. (புறம். 186)

12. திருவுடை மன்னரைக் காணின் திருமாலைக் கண்டேனே என்னும் (14 - 4 - 8)

13. சூழ்வார் கண்ஆக ஒழுகலான் மன்னவன்
சூழ்வாரைச் சூழ்ந்து கொளல். (குறள் 445)

14. மருள் கொண்ட மன்னவனும் மந்திரிகள் தமைநோக்கி
தெருள்கொண்டோர் இவர்சொன்ன தீயோனைச் செறுவதற்குப்
பொருள்கொணடு விடாதுஎன்பால் கொடுவாரும்.... (நாவு - 90)

15. இடிப்பாரை இல்லாத ஏமரா மன்னன்
கெடுப்பார் இலானுங் கெடும். (குறள் 448)

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PP. 167- 177

17

THIRUVALLUVAR- AS I SEE HIM

Prof. T.S. SRINIVASAN, M.L.

Thiruvalluvar - His name is known to every South Indian but his real name is still not known to us. Some say he belonged to the class of Valluvan. Valluvar is a respectable form of Valluvan. He was held in high esteem by the people of his age and so he was called Valluvar and this was added to his name. Thiru is the honorific prefix such as Mr., Sri etc.. So he was called Thiruvalluvar. But it is known definitely that he was living in Mylapore, Madras with his family. His wife's name was Vasuki. He lived about 2000 Years back. He was a weaver by profession. He was very religious and leading a simple life. Through some of his couplets he clearly proves that simple life and high thinking gives an everlasting bliss to a human being. His couplets on different walks of life clearly show that he must be a man of profound commonsense since we find different subjects being dealt with in Thirukkural and many scholars have great attraction for it. It has been translated in to many languages.

His father was a Brahmin and his sister was Avvai. When he was alive is not quiet certain. Prince Elela Singhan who was alive in the first century A.D. is said to have been a friend of Valluvar. Kural was published in 125 A.D. Kural was quoted in Manimekalai which was written in the first or second century,

A.D. It is considered as the Vedas of the Tamils. It is a Bible of Tamil Nadu. It is the gospel of mankind. It is very sweet to hear. It makes us think deeply. It is not a religious work. It never establishes any particular cult. He never deals with any particular philosophy. It is not a Purana or a Kavya speaking about gods. It deals with men. It deals with Society. It guides every individual and the human society. It deals with politics, religion, justice, etc, etc.

Thiruvalluvar speaks of Law and Justice. He gives a broad definition of justice. He deals with International law, Criminal law, Criminology, Penology etc. I see him as a Criminologist. He must be considered as the father of Criminology though the world says Lombroso is the father of Criminology. Why it is so, is the scope of this essay.

What is Criminology? It is a subject which is concerned with those particular conducts of an individual which are prohibited by the Society. It tries to discover the causes of criminality and suggests remedies to reduce crimes. The criminal policies postulated by the twin - sister branches (i.e.) Criminology and Penology are implemented though the instrumentality of Criminal Law. To put it differently, Criminal Law is the instrument of implementing the criminal philosophy. Criminology is the scientific study of crime. Caldwell says that in its broadest sense criminology is the entire body of knowledge regarding crime and criminals and the effort of Society to repress and prevent them. Criminal law is the index of Civilization. It is a barometer of moral thinking to use the expression of Friedman. Crime is a formal social condemnation of forbidden conduct buttressed by sanction calculated to prevent it (Weschster). Thus it is clear that Criminology, Penology, and Criminal law are interrelated, that one cannot rightly function without another. Taft says that Criminology is the scientific analysis of cirmes and treatment of Criminals. A true criminologist studies all the three branches mentioned above.

Thiruvalluvar touches all these. Hence he can be considered as a Criminologist in the true sense of the term.

Dr. P. K. Sen points out that our epics which depict the glory of our past civilisation amply establish that our ancestors had carefully analysed the subject of criminology. They correctly pointed out mental defectiveness as the main cause of crime. It is the egoistic urges of man which motivate him to do antisocial acts with the idea of deriving pleasure.

One of the fundamental principles of criminal law is that no man can be punished unless he has a guilty mind though no doubt statutes can create crimes for which a mere forbidden act is enough. This is one of the contributions of church to criminal law. This is expressed in the Latin maxim Actus non facitreum, nisi-mens sit-rea. From ancient times an antisocial act had been looked upon with moral digust. The word 'felony' began as a vituperative expression describing a vile kind of wickedness on the part of one whose mind was bent on mischief. It later became a technical term to denote the worst kind of crime and there appeared in legal requirements that felony should be expressly alleged in the indictment of the offender. Sir Stephen said that the 'full definition of every crime contains expressly or by implication a proposition as to a sate of mind. The Supreme Court of India on more than one occasion reiterated that unless a statute either clearly or by necessary implication makes out mensrea as a constituent part of a crime, a person should not be found guilty of an offence if he has not a guilty mind. In State of Gujarat Vs. D.P. Pandey A.I.R 1971 SC 866 the S.C. has stated the rule on the point in the following words "The broad principles accepted by courts in this country as well as in England are: Where an offence is created by a statute, however comprehensive and unqualified the language of the statute it is usually understood as silently requiring that the element of mens rea should be imported into the definition of the crimes, unless a contrary intention is expressed or implied. In other words, the plain words of a statute are read subject to a presumption, which may be rebutted, that the general rule of law

that no crime can be committed unless there is mens rea, has not been ousted by the particular enactment...... "Goddard L.J. in Brendt V wood (1946) 62 T.LR. 462 says " It is of utmost importance for the protection of the liberty of the subject that a court should always bear in mind, that unless a statute either clearly or by necessary implication rules out mens rea as a constituent part of a crime, the court should not find a man guilty of an offence against the criminal law unless he has a guilty mind......"

எனைத்தானும் எஞ்ஞான்றும் யார்க்கும் மனத்தானாம்
மாணாசெய் யாமை தலை.[1] *(குறள் 317)*

In Tamil it means as follows:- தீச்செயல்களை எக்காலத்தும் யாவர்க்கும் சிறிதாயினும் செய்யாமை தலையான அறம்.

இன்னா எனத்தான் உணர்ந்தவை துன்னாமை
வேண்டும் பிறன்கண் செயல். *(குறள் 316)*

In English it means as follows:- Let not a man consent to do those things to another which he knows will give sorrow.

Parimelazhagar when he is commenting on the word "மனத்தானாம்" In Kural 317 says that only when he wills to cause harm then alone he is doing a bad act. Thus Thiruvalluvar clearly mentions the famous doctrine of mens rea in these two couplets. So according to the great poet punishment must be based on evil thought and not on mere act alone. Thus the entire doctrine of mens rea has been explained by him in a small couplet which is characteristic of his brain power.

The great poet also recognised certain offences we see in the Indian Penal Code. For example he speaks about breach to trust in Kural 171 which runs thus:

நடுவு இன்றி நன்பொருள் வெஃகின் குடிபொன்றிக்
குற்றமும் ஆங்கே தரும். *(குறள் 171)*

பொருள்: நடுவு நிலைமை இன்றி ஒருவன் பிறர்க்குரிய மிக்க பொருளை விரும்புவானாயின், அதனால் அவனது குலமும் கெட்டு, அவ்விடத்தே குற்றமும் உண்டாம்.

Let us see Kural 282 which says taking another's property fraudulently or dishonestly is a bad act. It runs as follows:

உள்ளத்தால் உள்ளலும் தீதே பிறன்பொருளைக்
கள்ளத்தால் கள்வேம் எனல். (குறள் 282)

பொருள்: பிறன் பொருளை மனத்தால் நினைத்தாலும் தீது எனவே, அதனை மறைவினால் திருடுவோம் என்று முயலாது ஒழிக:

He speaks of defamation and when it can be considered as a defence. In modern law the publication of truth is a sufficient justification if it is made for public good. No public good can be derived by giving unnecessary publicity.

Kural 292 states:

பொய்மையும் வாய்மை யிடத்த புரைதீர்ந்த
நன்மை பயக்கும் எனின்

It means: பிறர்க்குக் குற்றம் தீர்ந்த நன்மைபயக்குமாயின்
பொய்மைச் சொற்களும் மெய்மைச் சொற்களின்
தன்மையை உடையனவாம்.

Thus we see in this Kural what has been mentioned is S. 499 Exception 1 to I.P.C.

Criminal Law includes criminal procedure also. On this aspect of procedural law also Thiruvalluvar speaks of some important principles. The important difference between Civil and Criminal Proceedings lies in the respective degrees of control exercised over them by the Sovereign authority in the State not so much in respect of their commencement as at their termination. Generally in criminal proceedings the State is the controlling authority. It is a party to the proceedings. A crime is an act against the interest of the public. It is the duty of the State to maintain law and order in a Society. Hence the State prosecutes offenders. This was recognised by Thiruvalluvar and it is mentioned in Kural 549 as follows:

குடிபுறங் காத்தோம்பிக் குற்றம் கடிதல்
வடுவன்று வேந்தன் தொழில்.

It means: குடிகளைப் பிறர்வருந்தாமல் காத்துத்தானும் வருந் தாது பேணி, அவர்களது குற்றங்களைத் தண்டனையால் ஒழித்தல், வேந்தனுக்குப் பழியன்று அஃதவன் தொழில்.

This principle was recognised by some writers of Criminal Law. Austin in his 'Lectures on Jurisprudence' Lecture 27 (Student's ed. 1920) pp 249-53, while making a distinction between Civil and Criminal wrongs observes.

"A wrong which is pursued by the Soverign or his subordinates is a crime. A wrong which is pursued at the discretion of the injured party and his representatives is a civil injury.

Motive is another important matter in law. It is not a basis of liability. Criminal law takes into account only a man's intention and not his motive. A Good motive will not render lawful what is in fact a Crime. Like wise, a bad motive will not make unlawful that which is lawful. An executive may enjoy putting a convict to death because of spite against him, but this would not render his lawful act a crime. Thus motive is not a sine qua non for holding an accused liable. However, the evidence of motive is relevant since it throws light on the question of intention and gives due for a crime and though the prosecution is not bound to prove motive for a crime, absence of motive may be a factor in consideration of the guilt of the accused. Thiruvalluvar is of the view that no bad act should be done even though the motive be good which he has expressed in Kural 656 as follows;

ஈன்றாள் பசிகாண்பான் ஆயினுஞ் செய்யற்க
சான்றோர் பழிக்கும் வினை.

English translation of it is as follows: Though a minister may see his mother starve, let him do no act which the wise would (treat with contempt).

It is practically found that food habits have a connection with criminality. Generally because of physical strength one commits offences against person and sex. According to Dr. William

Mc Dougall, temperament is a complete resultant of many factors each of which is in the main natively determined and they are alterable perhaps by disease and the influence of the Physical environment. especially temperature and food "Food, then is capable of changing and moulding temperament: Vegetarianism therefore may be useful in making the criminal docile. Valluvar also recognised this and mentioned it in a couplet as follows.

Kura -253-

படைகொண்டார் நெஞ்சம்போல் நன்றுஊக்காது ஒன்றன்
உடல்சுவை உண்டார் மனம்.

It means: ஒன்றின் உடலை உண்டார் மனம். படையைக் கையிற் கொண்டவன் மனம் போல், நன்மையை நினையாது.

In English it means: like the (murderous) mind of him carries a weapon (in his hand) the mind of him who feasts with pleasure on the body of another (creature), has no regard for goodness.

Anger is another reason for criminality. It affects the thinking power. It affects the humanitarian sentiments. It affects the equilibrium of the brain. It raises the blood pressure. A man in a high state of anger never thinks the consequence of his act.

His tension is relieved only when his anger is converted into a physical act. Hence anger must be controlled. A man who is extraordinarily angry will lose everything he has. He is not a man but an animal in the form of a human being, where anger is coupled with hatred, something undesirable may result, for when a person begins to hate another that hatred may lead him to have vengeance, thus causing an unsocial act.

Valluvar has understood this and mentioned in Kural 303 the following matter:

மறத்தல் வெகுளியை யார்மாட்டும் தீய
பிறத்தல் அதனான் வரும்.

It means: ஒருவர்க்கு தீயன எல்லாம்உளவாதல் அதனால் வரும் ஆகலான், யாவரிடத்தும் சினத்தை ஒழிக.

It means in English:-

Forget anger, towards every one, fountains of evil come from it.

Jealousy is another cause of crime. He who is jealous can commit any type of crime. It is a very vicious emotion. Socrates says "An envious man waxeth can with the fatness of his neighbours. Envy is the daughter of pride, the author of murder and revenge the beginner of secret sedition and the perpectual tormentor of virtue. Envy is the filthy slime of the soul; a poison or quick silver which consumeth the flesh and drieth up the marrow of the bones." A person who envies his rival's success, may resort to tricky, fraudulent, vicious or cunning methods to get rid of him in any manner possible. He may take revenge on his rival or satisfy his feelings of annoyance at his rival's good fortune, may harm him in some manner, and for that purpose, may resort to crime. Hence Valluvar says that this must be overcome by every one. In Kural 164 he says:

அழுக்காற்றின் அல்லவை செய்யார் இழுக்காற்றின்
ஏதம் படுபாக்கு அறிந்து.

It means in Tamil: பொறாமையாகிய தீ நெறியால் குற்றம் வருதலை அறிந்து, அப்பொறாமை காரணமாக அறம் அல்லா தனவற்றை அறிவுடையார் செய்யார்.

It means in English:(The wise) Knowing the misery that comes from transgression will not through envy commit unrighteous deeds.

What about poverty in its relation to crimes?

In his discussion on Economic crimes, Bonger says that not only poverty but also richness has a connection with criminality. A man who is rich but having an antisocial character is likely to commit crimes. White collar crimes are committed only by rich persons. So the main question is not whether rich or poor but good or bad. A dishonest rich man is worse than an

honest poor man. This has been recognised by Valluvar in Kural 1000 which runs as follows:-

பண்பிலான் பெற்ற பெருஞ்செல்வம் நன்பால்
கலம் தீமை யால் திரிந் தற்று.

It means: குணம் இல்லாதவன் பெற்ற பெரிய செல்வம் நல்லபால், கலத்தின் தீமையால் கெட்டாற் போலத் தனக்கும் பிறர்க்கும் இன்பம் பயவாது கெடும்.

It means in English: The great wealth obtained by one who has no goodness will perish like milk spoilt by the impurity of the vessel.

Even on the science of penology Thiruvalluvar has his say. King is the fountain of justice. He promulgates law. Law must have a sanction attached to it. It is the duty of a king to maintain law and order in Society. Anyone who breaches peace is to be punished and that is done by the king. Punishment involves the infliction of pain or forfeiture, the judicial Visitation with a penalty, chastisement or castigation. Dr. Walter Reckless in considering the meaning of punishment says: "It is the redress that the commonwealth takes against an offending member" (Reckless - Criminal Behaviour P. 258). Westermark. E. in his book on "The origin and development of the Moral Ideas" P. 169 says:

"Punishment is limited to such suffering as is inflicted upon the offender in a definite way by or in the name of the society of which he is a permanent or temporary member. The punishment to be given by a State in its coporate capacity was not realised in the beginning. To the primitive that a personal injury deserves a rejoinder is simple justice. The group may take no `official notice of exchange of injuries unless it erupts into a blood feud or other violence. Hoebel has advanced an interesting argument that acts of primitive retribution actually represent, sociologically speaking, a species of primitive justice undertaken, with the implicit approval of the retributors, group. Solon permitted any citizen to prosecute

instead of the injured only, thus showing the growing public interest in offences formerly considered of private concern. This has been stated already by Thiruvalluvar in Kural 549 as follows:-

குடிபுறம் காத்துஓம்பிக் குற்றம் கடிதல்
வடு அன்று வேந்தன் தொழில்.

In Tamil it can be translated as follows:- குடிகளை வருத்தாமல் காத்து, தானும் வருந்தாமல் பேணி, அவர்களது குற்றங்களைத் தண்டனையால் ஒழித்தல் வேந்தனுக்குப் பழி அன்று, அஃது அவன் தொழில்.

In English it can be translated as follows:-

In guarding the subjects (against injury from others) and in preserving them, himself, to punish crime is not a fault in a king; it is his duty.

Thiruvalluvar has emphathtically mentioned that the state has got a right to punish criminals. In other words the state will be a party to a criminal case. This is what we see in the modern criminal jurisprudence.

There are different forms of punishment, one of which is death sentence otherwise called capital punishment. A few years back, one of the burning questions in the field of penology was whether capital punishment should be retained or abolished? There were many arguments for and against and still it is not fully settled whether it is to be abolished once and for all. Authur Kestler in his book on Reflections on hanging punishment says whilst pretending to support reverence for human life, does in fact, tend to destroy it. Though many criminologists have emphatically said in one voice that capital punishment does more harm than good still we see in practice capital punishment is attached to various laws. In India in order to prevent persons from committing the offences of Railway sabotage Parliamentarians wanted to prescribe capital punishment as punishment for such offences. In connection with white collar crimes, they are thinking why capital punishment should not be prescribed for such offences. In other words modern

criminologists are theoretically arguing against it though they do some thing in practice which is against their theory. Thus, whether capital punishment has no deterrent effect at all has not been proved beyond reasonable doubt. Let us see what Thiruvalluvar says on this. He is of the view that there-must be death sentence and what we see is the main principle of the positive school of Criminology according to which if a criminal cannot be reformed at all he must be wiped out of existence. Kural 550 runs as follows.

கொலையிற் கொடியாரை வேந்தொறுத்தல் பைங்கூழ்
களைகட்டதனோடு நேர்

In Tamil it can be translated as follows

அரசன் கொடியவர்களைக் கொலையால் தண்டித்து தக்கோரைக் காத்தல், உழவன் களையைக் களைந்து, பயிரைச் காத்தலோடு ஒக்கும்.

In English it is as follows: For a king to punish criminals, with death, is like pulling up the weeds in the green corn.

Another theory as laid down by positive school of criminology is reformation of a criminal. A man becomes a criminal because of environment. Society is the mother of crimes. Hence an individual is not at all responsible for his crimes. He is to be reformed. Hence, "Hate the sin and not the sinner" that is the basis of modern penology. In order to give effect to this theory reformations have been introduced in prison. Probation, indeterminate sentence etc. has been followed in penology. Thiruvalluvar in Kural 314 mentions as follcws.

இன்னா செய் தாரை ஒறுத்தல் அவர்நாண
நல்நயம் செய்து விடல்

It means: தனக்குத் துன்பம் செய்தாரை ஒருவர் தண்டித்தல் அவர் தாமே நாணுமாறு அவருக்கு நல்ல நயமுடையன வற்றைச் செய்து எல்லாவற்றையும் மறத்தல்

In English it can be translated as follows. The (proper) punishment of those who have done evil (to you), is to put them to shame by showing great kindness to them.

Valluvar says in this small couplet the no punishment of criminal but his reformation will do a great benefit to him, in that he will become a good and reformed man. Thus the modern basis of criminology "Hate sin and not the sinner" has already been recognized by him years back.

The object of reading criminology is not to know as to why a human being commits a crime but to know how far effective prevention of such crimes can be made. So long as we have people we shall have delinquents and there are various causes to commit crimes. There is no easy answer for prevention of the behaviour society does not like. Prevention of crime is always better in the interests of criminals and society: A man commits a crime against property because he is poor or rich. We also commit crimes against persons because of anger etc. Whenever he wants anything and if he does not get it he becomes angry or irritated which in turn results in crimes. So, he must be getting a habit of seeing good and bad things from, the same angle. He should not be too happy if the gets something good nor too unhappy if gets something bad. In other words he must develop a philosophical mind.

So, a man must become godly minded to get a stable mind. He will never bother about likes and dislikes. He is free form criminal habits. This mind one can attain only if he becomes religious in the true sense of the term. In that stage he finds that God is in every one. So, he thinks if he beats another he is beating God. He will not steal because he does not like to steal the money of God. Thus Thiruvalluvar has given a very correct solution for the prevention of crimes though many criminologists tried and try to solve the problems of crime unsuccessfully.

Thus, the theories of many criminologists like Lombroso Ferri and others etc. had already been mentioned by the great saint of Tamilnadu.

Thus Thiruvalluvar was above these criminologists and it is not wrong if I say that Thiruvalluvar is the father and founder of modern criminology.

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18

TRIBUTES TO TIRUKKURAL

Compiled by

Dr. K.D. Thirunavukkarasu

EUROPEAN SCHOLARS

"The Kural is the master - piece of Tamil Literature - one of the highest and purest expressions of human thought.

That which, above all is wonderful in the Kural is the fact that its author addresses himself, without regard to castes, peoples or beliefs, to the whole community of the mankind; the fact that he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason; that he proclaims in their very essence, in their eternal characteristics, virtue and truth; that he presents it, as it were, in one group the highest law of domestic and social life; that he is equally perfect in thought, in language and in poetry, in the austere metaphysical contemplation of the great mysteries of their Divine Nature, as in the easy and graceful analysis of the tenderest emotions of the heart."

M. ARIEL (Preface to kural in Fr.)

"Tirukkural is superior to the Institutes of Manu and is worthy of the divine Plato himself."

Rev. H. BOWER

"No translation can convey any idea of its charming effect. It is truly an apple of gold in a network of silver."

Dr. GRAUL (Indo.to K. in Ger)

"It was one of the couplets in the third part (Kamattuppal) of the poem referring to the looks of a maid - the one which kills and the other which cures the looked that led Dr. Graul to admire Tamil poetry and study the Kural.

The Kural is composed in the purest Tamil. In about 12,000 words which the poet has employed to convey his thought there are scarcely fifty of Sanskrit origin. He throws the purity of Bunyan's English completely into the shade. No known Tamil work can even approach the purity of Kural.' It is a standing rebuke to the modern Tamil. Tiruvalluvar has clearly proved the richness, melody and power of his mother - tongue.

The 'Kural' cannot be improved nor its plan made more perfect. It is a perfect mosaic in itself. The slightest change in the size, shape or colour of a single stone would mar the beauty of the whole.

It is refreshing to think that a nation which has produced so great a man and so unique a work cannot be a hopeless, despicable race. The morality he preached could not have grown except on an essentially moral soil. To those therefore, who labour for the salvation of the Tamil people, the 'Kural' must be a work of peculiar nay, intense interest."

Dr. J. LAZARUS (Preface to Eng. tran)

"Tiruvalluvar, the author of the Kural, occupies the first place as a moralist among the Tamils. Indeed, it is generally acknowledged, that there is no treatise equal to the Kural in any Indian language."

JOHN MURDOCH
(Catalogue of Tamil Books/ P.14)

"The Weaver of Mylapore was undoubtedly one of the great geniuses of the world. Complete in itself, the sole work of its author (the Kural) has come down the stream of ages absolutely uninjured, hardly a single various reading of any importance being found.

In value it (Kural) outweighs the whole of the remaining Tamil literature and is one of the select number of great works which have entered into the very soul of a whole people and which can never die.

'Sir A. Grant says, 'Humility, Charity and forgiveness of injuries are not described by Aristotle.' Now these are every where forcibly inculcated by this Tamil Moralist.

The Kural owes much of its popularity to its exquisite poetic form. The brevity rendered necessary by the form gives an oracular effect to the utterances of the great Tamil "Master of Sentences." They are the choicest of moral epigrams. Their resemblance to gnomic poetry of Greece is remarkable as to their subjects, their sentiments and the state of society when they were uttered. Something of the same kind is found in Greek epigrams, in Martial and the Latin elegiac verse. There is a beauty in the periodic character of the Tamil construction in many of these verses that reminds the reader of the happiest efforts of Propertius."

G.U. Pope
(Preface to Sacred Kurral)

"It (Tirukkural) is an integral homogeneous work of art, the author of which addresses neither king, subject nor priest but men. And he (Tiruvalluvar) does not address man either as law - giver or prophet but as well - wisher, teacher and friend. He neither prophesied nor spoke in hints and riddles; his words contained no shade of doubt, he had full conviction of the truth of what he said, both as an artist and thinker. The Kural of Tiruvalluvar is rightly considered as chef D' Oeuvre of both Indian and world literature. This is due not only to the great artistic merits of the work, but also, and this is most important, to the lofty humane ideas permeating it, which are equally precious to the people all over the world, of all periods and countries,"

Dr. ALEXANDER PYATIGORSKY
Intr. to Tirukkural in Russian

"The Kural of Tiruvalluvar , a work consisting of 1330 distichs, or poetical aphorisms, on almost every subject connected with morals and political economy, and which is regarded by all Tamilians (and perhaps justly) as the finest composition of which the Tamils can boast appears to be not only the best but the oldest Tamil work of any extant which is now in existence."

ROBERT CALDWELL
(Comp. Gram. of Dr. Igs P.85)

"The idea of active love did arise in the popular ethics of India in fairly ancient times we know from many stories we meet in her literature and especially through the ethical maxims found in the Kural, a work which probably belongs to the second country A.D.

'Kural' means short strophe. 'The work is written in the Tamil language ......what a difference between the 'Kural' and the Laws of Manu, which originated some few centuries before it! In the latter, under the dominance of the Brahmanic spirit, world and life affirmation is still tolerated alongside world and life negation. In the 'Kural' world and life negation is only like a distant cloud in the sky. In 250 maxims - they form the concluding part of the work - earthly love is lauded. Later times, because they cause offence, interpret them allegorically as concerning the love of the soul to God.

In the ethics of the 'Kural', as in those of the Law of Manu, the idea of reward has a place. The way of virtue is recommended because it leads to a better reincarnation or to liberation from re-birth. ......Neverthelss, ethics in the 'Kural' are not so entirely dominated by the idea of reward as in Brahmanism, Buddhism and the Bhagavad-Gita. We already find here the knowledge that good must be done for its own sake. It shines out from various maxims.....

Whilst the Bhagavad-Gita in a forced and chilly manner gives as a motive for remaining in active life that it is in accordance

with the order of the Universe, the 'Kural' justifies it - what an advance - by the idea of ethical activity. Work and profit place a man in a position to do good.

According to the 'Kural' duty is not confined, as in the Bhagavad-Gita to what the caste calling involves but consists in general in "all that is good". Maxims about joy in activity, such as one would not expect from the Indian lips, bear witness to the strength of the world and life affirmation present in the 'Kural'.

Like the Buddha and the Bhagavat Gita the 'Kural' desires inner freedom from the world and a mind free from hatred. Like them it stands for the commandment not to kill and not to damage. It has appropriated all the valuable ethical results of the thought of world and life negation. But in addition to this ethic of inwardness, there appears in the 'Kural' the living ethic of love.

With sure strokes the 'Kural' draws the ideal of simple ethical humanity. On the most varied questions concerning the conduct of man to himself and to the world its utterances are characterized by nobility and good sense. There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom."

- DR. ALBERT SCHWEITZER.
(Indian Thought and its Development, pp. 162-63)

"Tiruvalluvar, guided by advice, had the address to select three topics of general interest and to avoid entirely everything that might be disputed or might be offensive to any of every sect; adding to this precaution great ingenuity of thought, and peculiar beauty and elegance of language, he produced a work which united every suffrage, and stands confessed, even to the present day, to be best and chief of all compositions in the polished dialect."

- WILLIAM TAYLOR.
(Oriental Historical Manuscripts, p. 177)

"Tiruvalluvar's Kural, the 1330 short sentences on the three aims of life-Dharma, Artha, Kama, is one of the gems of world literature. Buddhists, Jains, Vaishnavas and Saivas have claimed the Pariah sage and poet of the Tamil land as their own. But he belongs to none of them or rather to all of them. For he stands above all races, castes and sects, and what he teaches, is a general human morality and wisdom. No wonder that the Kural has not only been much read, studied and highly praised in the land of its origin for centuries, but has also found many admirers in the west, ever since it has become known.

Sage Tiruvalluvar should not be styled the unknown sage of Mylapore, for he has long been known far beyond the borders of his mother country.

- PROF. M. WINTERNITZ.
(A History of Indian Literature, Vol. II, p.128)

"Man in the totality of his relationships' is the Subject of the, Kural. After a 'cosmic' introduction, which praises God, rain, supermen and virtue, the author of the book turns towards man, whose personality is gradually unfolded in "ever expanding concentric cycles" within the family with his wife and children, within the community with his friends, and within his country in his relationship towards the ruler and the state. Man is shown not in a static state but in development, and the force that is behind this dynamism is sympathy, even love, manifesting itself through kind thought, sweet words and right actions.

- KAMIL ZVELEBIL.
(The Smile of Murugan on Tamil Literature of South India, pp. 163 & 164)

"However, one should never contemplate the couplets in isolation. We must again and again stress that they have true validity and meaning only in their patterned relations to other couplets, and to the whole. And when read and contemplated in this way, Tiruvalluvar's ethics is never that of a Canakya or a Macchiavelli."

(Ibid., P. 165)

"Tiruvalluvar's Kamattuppal is utterly different from any of the Sanskrit Kamasastras. While Vatsyayana's work (and all later Sanskrit erotology) is Sastra, that is, objective and scientific analysis of sex, the third part of the Kural is a poetic picture of eros, of ideal love, of its dramatic situations."

(Ibid., P. 166)

"Tirukkural is a great work; and its author must have been a great man, and a great genius;..."

(Ibid., P. 168)

Let it be said in conclusion that it is almost impossible to truly appreciate the maxims of the Kural through a translation. Tirukkural must be read and re-read in Tamil. This fact, too, reveals something about the nature and degree of its "poetic excellence".

(Ibid. P. 169)

"He was without doubt a part of one great Indian ethical, didactic tradition. It is more important that he was also a very integral part of the non-Sanskritic and pre-Sanskritic Tamil tradition; this fact is seen not only from his conception of "pleasure" which is so typically reflexion of the akam genre, but also from the all-pervading pragmatic, this-worldly, empirical and, to a great extent, humanistic and universalistic character of his particular conception of *dharma* and *niti*.

(Ibid P. 171)

INDIAN SCHOLARS

Tiruvalluvar was a Tamil Saint. Tradition says that he was a Harijan weaver. He is said to have lived in the first century of the Christian Era. He gave us the famous Tirukkural, holy maxims described by Tamilians as the Tamil Veda and by M. Ariel as one of the highest and purest expressions of human

thought. The maxims number 1330. These have been translated into many languages. There are several English translations."

- MAHATMA GANDHI.
("Young India", 1917)

"He (Tiruvalluvar) is one of those seers whose message is intended not merely for their own age or country but for all time and for all mankind. Tiruvalluvar has given to the world a work to which, in perfection of form, profundity of thought, nobleness of sentiment, and earnestness of moral purpose, very few books outside the grand scriptures of humanity can at all be compared. Indeed the work is eulogized by the Tamil people as the Tamil Veda; the universal Veda, the later Veda, the Divine Book etc., etc."

- V.V.S. IYER
(Intr. to "Maxims of Tiruvalluvar" P. XIII)

"The six creeds of the days of Kalladanar have since then ramified into six and sixty or more in our own days and promise to grow veritably into six hundred and sixty six in the future. But like the Fixed Stars in the distant spaces of the heavens, Tiruvalluvar's Tirukkural seems to hold its place unalterably, as the Universal Book of Humanity for all ages and climes."

- K. APPADURAI.
(The Mind and Thought of Tiruvalluvar, P. 2)

"The grandeur of a Milton, the grace of a Dante, the Universality of a Shakespeare, the sublimity of an Aristotle, the idealism of a Plato and the moral fervour of a Marcus Aurelius are all to be found in harmonious blending and appropriate proportion in this 'Bible of Mankind.' This universal character not withstanding, the Kural is the Testament of the Tamils. It has been the fountain of inspiration to generations of geniuses, saints and moralists, statesmen and princes."

- K. M. BALASUBRAMANIAM.
(in Tirukkural Souvenir, 1935)

"Greece gave birth to Homer and Socrates. The Tamil Land gave birth to Tiruvalluvar and Kamban. Kamban is the Homer and Tiruvalluvar is the Socrates of southern India. The literary glory of the Tamils rests on Tiruvalluvar and Kamban, not to speak of Auvaiyar - the Muse in human embodiment, and a host of others."

- PROF. T. CHELVAKESAVARAYA MUDALIAR.
(Preface to "Tiruvalluvar")

"Kural is rightly called the Tamil Veda : it is a poetic composition of great authority on the art of living. The author, Tiruvalluvar, examines the intricacies of human nature with deep insight, consummate skill and robust common sense. There is also a freshness of outlook which makes Kural a precious book for all time."

- SHRIMAN NARAYAN.
(Foreword, Tirukkural in Gujarathi, by Kantilal Kalani)

Tamil language has an old tradition extending over thousands of years. Tirukkural, our immortal Tamil classic is a gospel of true living, which by its ethical content, and universal appeal is indeed an epitome of the cultural creativity of the mankind."

- HON'BLE DR. M. KARUNANIDHI.
(Inaugural Address, Gujarathi Sahitya Parishad)

The Kural is one of the finest products of Indian culture. Its author Tiruvalluvar was a South Indian Pariah and flourished probably about 200 A.D. Though born of an untouchable, Tiruvalluvar combined the wisdom of a statesman and law-giver with the spiritual vision of a saint. His Kural is a veritable treasure house of good counsels for the house-holder, and the king as well as the man seeking after beatitude or liberation. Thus it is not only a great book of Indian, but of world literature as well."

- MONOMOHAN GHOSH.
(Modern Review, 1931)

Those who study Tirukkural with a discerning mind, will definitely be imbued with the spirit of self respect. It teaches the principles of political science as well as polity, social awareness and the economic values of life.

The supreme aim of composition of Tirukkural appears to be the instruction of good habits and inculcation of lofty ideals based on pragmatism that will guide the mankind in the right direction, and teaches the maxims of moral life. Therefore it has been claimed as the only scripture that attracts the attention of all people of the world without any reservations.

It envisages a new social order based on liberty, equality and fraternity and thus it ensures a life of Universal Brother hood.

- PERIYAR E.V. RAMASAMI

"Let us go to the nooks and corners of our villages with Tirukkural in our hands.

Let us tell the people the greatness underlying in Tirukkural.

Convey the message of Valluvar, which has not yet been explained to our masses.

We will make every strenuous efforts to place Tirukkural in the first rank of world literature, which has not yet been undertaken. This requires for a chalked out Five Year Plan of implementation. This calls for an intensive devotion, sustained interest and dedication to inculcate and instruct the lofty ideals of Tiruvalluvar, at least in Tamilnadu.

- Arignar Anna (1949)

"Among the precious classics of the world literature the Kural takes a place in the front rank...

Tiruvalluvar was one of those rare and greatmen whose catholic spirit rose above all denominations and whose vision

was not clouded by dogma or prejudice of any kind. His teachings elude classification on a denominational basis."

- C. RAJAGOPALACHARI.
(Preface to "Kural")

"Tirukkural is a poetic composition of great antiquity in the Tamil literature. Many great minds have shed their powerful, radiant light on this gem and justly famous classic of Tamil.

In its essence Tirukkural is a treatise par excellence on the art of living. Tiruvalluvar, the author diagnoses the intricacies of human nature with such penetrating insight, perfect mastery and consummate skill absorbing the most subtle concepts of modern psychology that one is left wondering at his sweep and depth."

- DR. K. M. MUNSHI.
(Foreword to C.R.'s "Kural")

"The Tirukkural is to the Tamils what the Bible is to the Christians, the Koran to the Muslims, the Zend Avesta to the Parsis, the Torah to the Jews, and the Granth Saheb to the Sikhs. Therefore, the Tamils have called the Tirukkural the Tamil Veda."

- G. VANMIKANATHAN
(Preface to "The Tirukkural" P. VII)

It has been a well known fact that Tirukkural has secured a unique place in the domain of world literature. Kural has been acclaimed as great as the ethical and religilous scriptures of the world such as Bhagavad Gita, sacred Kuran and Holy Bible. It has been said that the work of Valluvar excels in its lofty ideals and in the direct appeal to the human heart. The universal outlook of Tirukkural and its profound wisdom of pragmatic moral ideals have enhanced the greatness of this work and have placed it in the fore front of the holy scriptures of the world.

V.I. Subramoniam

The greatness of Tirukkural lies in the three factors. One is the absence of parochialism and racial chauvinism in the work. Another factor is the humane outlook of the author. The third one is the Universal appeal of the work.

There is no reference direct, or in direct to the Tamil language, the Tamils and Tamilnadu, In this same way, there is no specific reference to the three royal dynasties of Tamilnadu or to the then ruling monarchs the Chera, Chola and Pandyan kingdoms of Tamilnadu.

Valluvar inculcates not only a philosophy of Ahimsa, non-killing and non-eating the flesh of the birds and animals, but he also envisages a philosophy of recognising the feelings and yearnings of man. He advises to follow the virtue of non-injuring others and instructs to alleviate the sorrows and suffereings of human beings.

In visualising new social order, Tiruvalluvar informs the humanity, the ways and means to cross the barriers of community, race, language and religions. He lays stress on the oneness of humanity. With this basic idea in his mind, he has given a facinating picture of a 'Perfect Man' or the 'Citizen of the World'.

K. Anbazhakan
TRIBUTES AND TRANSLATIONS OF TIRUKKURAL
MADRAS - 85 MANIYAGAM, 1986.

APPENDIX

A NOTE ON THE CONCEPT, DESIGN AND EXECUTION OF THE MONUMENTAL STATUE OF TIRUVALLUVAR.

வான்புகழ் வள்ளுவர்க்கு வானுயரச் சிலை

வை. கணபதி ஸ்தபதி

உருவ வருணனை



திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையானது, கன்னியாகுமரியில், முக்கடல் நடுவே, அலைமோதும் மலை மீது, வலது காலை ஊன்றி இடது காலைச் சற்றே மடக்கி வைத்து, நின்ற கோலத்தில் காட்சி தருவதாய் வடிவமைக்கப் பட்டிருக்கிறது.

இச்சிலை 95 அடி உயரங்கொண்டு, 38 அடி உயரப் பீடத்தின் மீது சுகமாய் நிற்கிறது. தனது வலக்கையில் அறம், பொருள், இன்பம் என்ற முப்பாலை முத்திரையாகப் பிடித்து இடக் கையில் திருக்குறள் ஏட்டினைத் தாங்கி, கருணை பொழியும் பார்வையுடையதாய் விளக்கமுறுகிறது.

தலைமீது தூக்கி முடிந்திட்ட கொண்டையைத் தலைக்கு மகுடமாய் அணிந்து இடுப்பில் பட்டாடையுடுத்தி, மார்பில் மேலாடை பூண்டு, புலவர் கோவாய்க் காட்சி அளிக்கின்றது இச்சிலை.

எக்காலத்தும், எல்லா மக்கட்கும் பொருந்தும் நீதி நெறிகளை அருளிய செய்தியைப் பேசும் உதடுகளால் உணர்த்தி, குறள் ஏட்டினைச் சுற்றி வைக்காது திறந்து வைத்து, அதன் இடையறாத் தேவையினைச் சுட்டிக்காட்டி, சுவடியால் திருக்குறளின் தொன்மையையும் உணர்த்தியுள்ளது. சுவடியின் மீது 'திருக்குறள்' எனும் சொற்றொடர் பொறிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.

திருக்குறளானது 1330 பாக்களை 133 அதிகாரங்களில் அடக்கி வைத்து, தமிழர்தம் நெறி காட்டும் அரியதொரு நீதி நூலாய் விளங்கிடும் நிலையில், 38 அதிகாரங்களால் அறத்தை உணர்த்தி, எஞ்சியுள்ள 95 அதிகாரங்களால் பொருளையும் இன்பத்தையும் உணர்த்துவதால், அறத்துப்பாற் பகுதியை 38 அடி உயரங்கொண்ட 'அறப்பீடமாகவும்', பொருளும் இன்பமும் சேர்ந்த பகுதியை 95 அடி உயரங்கொண்ட வள்ளுவர்தம் திருமேனியாகவும் சித்திரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. அதாவது, அறத்தை ஆதாரமாகக் கொண்டு பொருளும், இன்பமும் துய்க்கப்பட வேண்டும் எனும் சீரியதொரு கருத்தைப் பீடமும் சிலையும் ஒரு சேர வெளிப்படுத்துவதாக உள்ளது. மொத்தத்தில் 133 அதிகாரங்களைக் கொண்டு விளங்கும் திருக்குறள் 133 அடி உயரங் கொண்ட திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையாய் உருவகிக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

சிற்பக்கலைத் துறையில் இறைப் படிமங்கள் பீடத்தின் மீதே நிறுவப்படும். பீடத்தைப் பீட சக்தியென்றும் இறையுருவத்தைப் பிம்பசக்தி என்றும் இரண்டையும் ஒன்றாக இணைத்து வைத்துப் போற்றுவதே தமிழர் கலைமரபு. இதற்கொப்ப அறமே பீடமாகி, பொருளும் இன்பமும் உருவமாகி மிளிரும் நுட்பத்தை 133 அடி உயரங்கொண்ட இச்சிலை காட்டுவதாகிறது. இத்தகைய பீடத்தில் உள்ளடங்கியதாகத் தாமரைப் பீடமொன்று காட்டப் பெறுவதும் ஒரு கலை மரபே. இம்மரபிற்கிணங்க, 38 அடி உயரத்திற்கு உட்பட்ட நிலையில் எழில்மிகு தாமரைப் பீடமொன்றும் நிறுவப்பெற்று அதன் மீது 95 அடி உயரங்கொண்ட உருவத்தனாய்த் திருவள்ளுவர் இயற்றப் பட்டிருக்கிறார்.

அறம், பொருள், இன்பம் ஆகிய முப்பாலை இணைத்து உருவகிக்க இச்சிலையினை - 'உயிர் தரித்த உடல் போல' - 'உருத்தரித்த வள்ளுவம்' என்று சொல்வது பொருந்துமன்றோ? முக்கடல் சங்கமிக்கும் குமரி முனையில் முப்பாற்கடலாம் 'வள்ளுவம்' வான் முகிலை முட்டும் நோக்கில் எழுச்சிகொண்டு நிற்கிறது.

வள்ளுவம் எட்டுத் திக்குகளிலும் பரவியதோடல்லாமல் வான்முதல் பாதாளம் வரை விராவி நிற்கும் கருத்தினை -

> **வள்ளுவன் தன்னை உலகினுக்கே தந்து**
> **வான்புகழ் கொண்ட தமிழ்நாடு**

என்ற அமரகவி பாரதியின் கூற்றுக்கேற்பப் பத்துத் திசைகளை உணர்த்தும் வகையில் நான்கு கோடிகளில், கோடி ஒன்றுக்கு இரண்டிரண்டு யானைச் சிற்பங்களும், நுழைவாயிலில் பிறிதிரண்டு யானைச் சிற்பங்களுமாக மொத்தத்தில் 10 யானைச் சிற்பங்கள் திசைகள் நோக்கி விரைந்து நடைபோடும் பாவனையில் அறப்பீடத்தைச் சுற்றி நிற்கும் சுவர்ப்பகுதியை அலங்கரிக்கின்றன. சிற்பக் கலை மரபிலே யானை ஆற்றலின் உருவகமாய் 'திக்கெஜங்கள்' என்ற பெயரில் நிறுவப்படுகின்றது. சொல்லுருவைக் (aural word form) கல்லுருவாகக் காட்டுவதே (visual word form) கவிக் கலைஞராம் சிற்பியர் மரபு. எனவே, 133 அடி உயரங்கொண்ட திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையானது கல்லிலே இழைத்த கவிதையாக (poem in stone) உருப்பெற்றுள்ளது. கவிஞர்கள் போல், மரபுச் சிற்பக் கலைஞர்களும் தம் உள்ளமென்ற உணர்ச்சித் திடலில் (field of consciousness) கருக்களை முகிழச் செய்து கொண்டு, சொல்லுருக்களை இசை நயத்தோடும் (musicalness) உருவாக்கிக் கொண்டு, அத்தகைய அகக்காட்சிகளையே கல்லுருக்களாக - கற்கவிதைகளாகப் படைக்கிறார்கள். இத்தகைய அடிப்படையில் உருப்பெற்ற கல்லுருவே சிற்பம் எனப்படும். நுற்பத்தின் பிறிதொரு சொல்லே சிற்பமாகும். மேலும், இதே போலத்தான் கவிதையாகக் கட்டடங்களையும், தேர்களையும், சிற்பங்களையும், நாடு நகரங்களையும் மரபுச் சிற்பிகள் தோற்றவிக்கிறார்கள். இதை உற்றறிந்த மேலை நாட்டுக் கலைஞர்கள், மரபு சார் கவினுறு கட்டடங்களை உறைந்திட்ட இசை வடிவங்கள் (frozen music) என்று புகழ்வாராயினர். இக்காரணங்கள் பற்றியே பண்டை மரபுச் சிற்பியர் 'கவிக் கலைஞர்' என்று அழைக்கப்பட்டார்கள்.

எனவே, துண்டுக் கற்களாம் எழுத்துக்களைக் கோத்து வள்ளுவர் உருவமாம் சொல்லாக்கி வள்ளுவமாம் பொருளை வைத்து, தாளமானமாம் யாப்பைக் கொண்டு கவினுறு உருவை (சிலையை)க் கட்டி, வள்ளுவர் பற்றிய சிறப்புச் செய்திகளை அணிகளாய்க் காட்சிப் படுத்தி இயற்றிய அழகுக் கவிதையே - உடல் தரித்த வள்ளுவமாய் - திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையாய்க் காட்சி தருகிறது.

உருவ இலக்கணம்

திருவள்ளுவர்க்கு 133 அடி உயரச் சிலை எழுப்ப வேண்டுமென்ற தமிழக முதல்வர் டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்களின் கருத்துக்கு வடிவம் தரும் நேரத்தில், படிமமானத்திற்கு எடுத்தாளப் பெற்ற அளவுகோல் ஒன்றுண்டு. இந்த அளவுகோல் தான் கவிதை மரபிலே யாப்பு அல்லது கட்டு என்று சொல்லப்படும். ஆங்கிலத்தில் இதனை speech rhythm என்றும் தமிழ் மரபிலே 'சொற்கட்டு' என்றும் சொல்லப்படும். கவிதை மரபிலே - இசை மரபிலே - ஆடல் மரபிலே - காலமாத்திரை (time unit) என்று குறிக்கப்படும். அதாவது உளவியல் துறை சார்ந்த ஒரு வகையான கால அளவு - காலக்கணக்கு - காலமானம் - படிமமானத்திற்கான - அடிப்படை அலகாக (basic unit) கையாளப்படுகிறது. இதனை ஆங்கிலத்தில் frequency of vibration (அ) ரிதம் (rhythm) என்று சொல்லுவர். இத்தகைய ரிதத்தல் தான் செடி கொடிகள், மரங்கள், பறவைகள், விலங்கினங்கள், ஏன் மனிதனும்கூட விந்து நிலையிலிருந்து வளர்ச்சியுற்று உடல் தரிக்கின்றான் என்பது நுட்பமிகு சிற்ப விஞ்ஞானமாகும். இதனை biological rhythm என்றும் இக்கால விஞ்ஞானம் கூறும். இஃது இயற்கையிலே நடைபெற்று வரும் விந்தைமிகு விஞ்ஞான நிகழ்ச்சி (scientific phenomenon) ஆகும்.

இந்தக் காலக் கணக்கே (time unit) தொழில்நுட்பத் துறையில் தாளக்கணக்கு (அ) தாளமானம் என்றும் சொல்லப்படுகிறது. அதாவது, காலமானமானது, தாளமானம் எனப்படுவதாயிற்று. இந்தத் தாளமானத்தைத்தான் கவிஞர்களும் கலைஞர்களும் கவிதையிலே, ஆடலிலே, பாடலிலே கையாள்கிறார்கள். ஆடல் கலைஞர் தாள் தட்டி இந்தக் காலக்கணக்கை உணர்த்துவதால்

தாளமானம் எனப்படுவதாயிற்று. ஆடற்கலையிலேதான் தாளம் என்ற சொல் தொல்பழங்காலந்தொட்டு இன்றுவரை தமிழ் மரபில் புழங்கி வருகிறது. பிறகு விரல் சுண்டிக் கவிதையிலேயும், மற்றும் கைதட்டி இசையிலேயும் இக்காலமானம் உணர்த்தப் பெறுவதாயிற்று. இதே காலமானத்தை - தாளமானத்தை - இடமானமாக (spatial measure)க் கொண்டு இயற்றப் படுவனவே மரபுச் சிற்பங்களும், சிற்பநிகர் கட்டடங்களுமாகும். கால மானத்தைத் தாளமானமாகக் கொண்டிட்ட இயல், இசை, நடம் ஆகிய மூன்றும் ஒரே இலக்கணம் கொண்டு - ஓரினப்பட்டு - ஒரு சேர - முத்தமிழ் என்று பெயர் பெறுவதாயிற்று. இத்தாளமானத்தை அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்ட சிற்பமும் கட்டடமும் மேலும் இரண்டு தமிழாகி ஐந்தமிழ் என்ற சொல்லும் சிற்பியர் சமூகத்தில் வழங்கி வரலாயிற்று. இதனைப் பஞ்சமரபு என்று சொல்வதும் தொல் பழஞ்சிற்பியர் மரபாகும்.

இத்தகைய தாளமானத்தை இடமானமாகக் (spatial unit) கொண்டு உருப்பெற்றதே பேசிவரும் திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையென்று சொல்லும் நேரத்தில், இதற்கான எண்ணிக்கையிலிருந்து (அதிகாரம் மற்றும் பாக்கள் அமைப்பு முறை) இச்சிலையின் படிமமானம் வகுத்துக் கொள்ளப்பட்டிருக்கிறது என்பது சிறப்பானதொரு நுட்பச் செய்தியாகும். வள்ளுவர் ஒவ்வொரு அதிகாரத்தையும் 10 பாக்கள் கொண்டதாக அமைத்துக் கொண்டுள்ளார். அதிகாரத்திற்கு அதிகாரம் இந்த எண்ணிக்கை மாறுபடாமல் ஒரே சீராக (rhythm) அமைத்துக் கொண்ட பாங்கினை இதில் காணலாம். இதையொட்டி, ஓர் அதிகாரத்தில் 10 பாக்களைச் சிலையின் முக உயரமாகக் கொண்டு இவ்வளவையே மூலதனமாகக் கொண்டு வள்ளுவர் சிலையில் அனைத்து உறுப்புகளின் அளவுகளை நிர்ணயித்துக் கொள்ளலாயிற்று. அதாவது, சிலையின் முகத்தளவு அல்லது முகமானம் 10 அடி கொண்ட தாளமானமாகிறது. அங்ஙனம் பத்துப் பத்தாக, பத்தின் மடங்கினதாகவும், (ten and multiples of ten) பத்தின் பின்னங் களாகவும் (fractionals of ten) கொள்வது biological growth என்ற விந்துவளர் நெறியொத்ததாகும். (growth of egg into chick or growth of seed into plant). மனித விந்துவும், இப்படித்தான் கரு நிலையிலிருந்து உரு நிலைக்கு வளர்ந்தோங்குகிறது. அங்ஙனம் இச்சிலைக்குக் கொண்டிட்ட படிம அளவுகளைக் கீழே காண்க.

முகம்	10 பாக்கள்	10 அடி	1 முகம்	1 தாளம்
உடல்	30 பாக்கள்	30 அடி	3 முகம்	3 தாளம்
தொடை	20 பாக்கள்	20 அடி	2 முகம்	2 தாளம்
கால்	20 பாக்கள்	20 அடி	2 முகம்	2 தாளம்
பேருறுப்பு	80 பாக்கள்	80 அடி	8 முகம்	8 தாளம் (1)
உச்சந்தலை	$2\,^1/_2$ பாக்கள்	$2\,^1/_2$ அடி	1/4 முகம்	1/4 தாளம்
கழுத்து	$2\,^1/_2$ பாக்கள்	$2\,^1/_2$ அடி	1/4 முகம்	1/4 தாளம்
முட்டி	$2\,^1/_2$ பாக்கள்	$2\,^1/_2$ அடி	1/4 முகம்	1/4 தாளம்
தாள்	$2\,^1/_2$ பாக்கள்	$2\,^1/_2$ அடி	1/4 முகம்	1/4 தாளம்
	10 பாக்கள்	10 அடி	1 முகம்	1 தாளம் (2)
சொண்டை (முடி)	5 பாக்கள்	5 அடி	1/2 முகம்	1/2 தாளம் (3)
சிலையின் மொத்த உயரம் (1 + 2 + 3)	95 பாக்கள்	95 அடி	$9\,^1/_2$ முகம்	$9\,^1/_2$ தாளம்

சுருக்கம்

பேருறுப்பு மட்டும்	8 தாளம்	80 அடி
சிற்றுறுப்பு உள்ளிட்ட சிலை உயரம்	9 தாளம்	90 அடி
முடி உள்ளிட்ட சிலையின் மொத்த உயரம்	9 1/2 தாளம்	9 1/2 அடி

இத்தகைய உருவ இலக்கணப் பண்போடு இயற்றப்பட்டதே திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையாகும். இன்னுமொரு படிமமானம் பற்றிய நுட்பம் (rhythm) இச்சிலையமைப்பின் இயல்பாய் அமைந்துள்ளதைக் காணலாம். இது vertical proportion (அ) சிலையின் உயரமானத்தைப் பற்றியதாகும். பீடத்தின் உயரமாகிய 38 அடியின் $2\,^1/_2$ பங்கு (95 அடி) உயரம் சிலையின் உயரமாய் அமைந்துள்ள இச்செய்தி, கட்டடக்கலை இலக்கணச் சார்புடைய தாகும். வானுயர்த்திச் செய்யும் கோபுரங்களுக்குரிய உயரமானம் இதுவே. வள்ளுவரே தனது முப்பாலுக்கு ஓர் வடிவ இலக்கணமே வகுத்துக் கொண்டு இயற்றியுள்ளாரோ என்று எண்ணத் தோன்றுகிறது. முற்றுமறிந்த இந்த மாமுனிவர்க்கு இஃதொன்றும் பெரிய காரியமல்லதான். எனவே, அறப்பீடத்தின் மீது கோபுரமாகத் திருவள்ளுவர் நிற்கிறார் என்று சொல்லி மகிழ்ந்திடலாம்.

மேலே பட்டியலிட்டுக் காட்டிய படிமமானங்கள் சிற்ப விஞ்ஞான நெறி வழிப்பட்டதாகும். இத்தகைய படிம மானமே தமிழகச் சிற்ப வடிவங்களுக்கும் கட்டட அமைப்புகளுக்கும் நல்லதொரு தோற்றப் பொலிவைத் தருகின்றன.

கட்டுமான இலக்கணம்

இங்ஙனம் அளவு மதிப்பீடு செய்துகொண்ட பிறகு செய்முறைக்கு ஏற்ற பல கட்டுமான நுட்பங்கள் இச்சிலை நிர்மாணத்தில் புகுத்தப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. வெளிப்பார்வைக்குத் திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையானது மனித உடல் தரித்த தோற்ற முடையதாகும். ஆனால் மனித வடிவத்தை - நின்ற நிலையில் - சிலையாக நிறுத்தும்போது உடலமைப்பின் பலஹீனங்கள் பல வெளிப்படுகின்றன. 133 அடி கொண்ட இச்சிலையின் தலை மட்டும் 20 அடியாகும். ஒரு மாடிக் கட்டட உயரமுடையது இந்தத் தலை. இதனை உடல்மீது தோள் மட்டத்தில் எப்படிப் பொறுத்தி நிற்க வைப்பது என்பது ஒரு பிரச்சினையே.

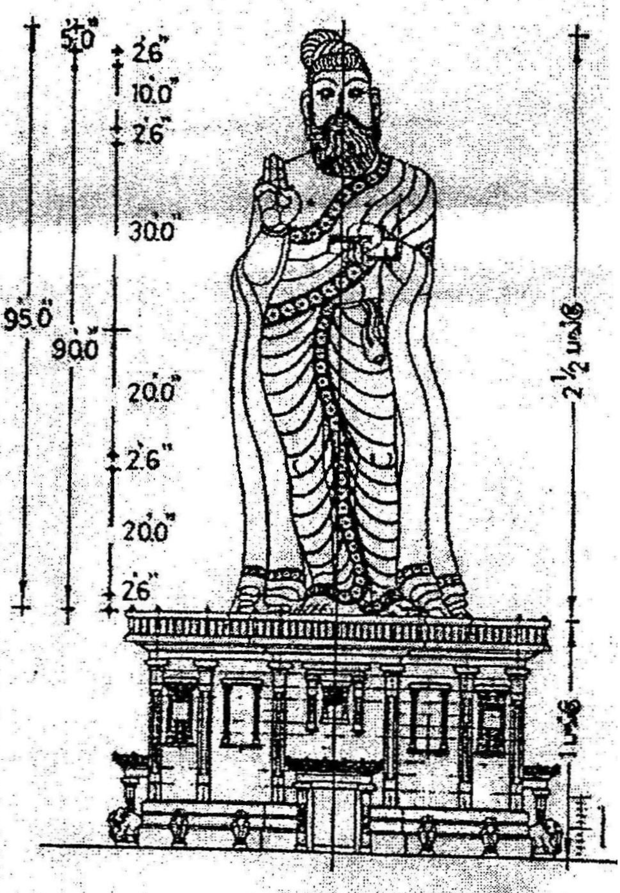
அதாவது, மனித வடிவமானது மெலிந்த கை கால்களையும், தொடைகளையும் தன் உயரத்தில் பாதியளவு கொண்டுள்ளது. எஞ்சிய பாதி உடல் பருமனும் பளுவும் உடையது. இப்படிப்பட்ட ஓர் உருவத்தை 95 அடி உயர முடையதாய்க் கல்லால் கட்டி நிறுத்துவது என்பது கடினமே. இத்தகைய மனித வடிவத்தின் பலஹீனங்கள் கட்டுமான விதிமுறைகளால் தீர்க்கப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. மனித வடிவத்தைத் தாங்கியிருப்பதும், நிலைகுலையாமல் நிற்க வைப்பதும், கால்களோ அல்லது தொடைகளோ அல்ல. அது மனித வடிவத்திற்குள் நின்று செயல்படும் உயிர்ப்பு (அ) ஆத்மசக்தியாகும். (live energy). இந்த ஆத்ம சக்தியை உற்றுணர்ந்து, அதன் செயலறிந்து இச்சிலை நிற்க வைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது என்று சொன்னால் எவரும் நம்பிடுவதற்கில்லைதான். சிற்பக்கலைத் துறையானது இவ்வச்சத்தை அல்லது ஐயப்பாட்டைத் தனது விஞ்ஞான நெறி தழுவிய கட்டுமான நுட்பத்தால் வென்று விட்டதெனலாம்.

இச்சிலை நம் கண் முன்னால் இன்று நிற்கிறது. பல நூறு ஆண்டுகள் அசையாத் தூண் போல நிற்கவும் போகிறது. இது எங்ஙனம் நிறுவப்பட்டது என்பதை ஒரு சிறிது இங்கே நோக்கலாம். இஃதொரு விந்தையும் விந்தையுமாகும். பாராட்டுக்கும் பரிசிலுக்கும் உரிய பொறியியல் நுட்பமாகும். இதனைத் தெரிந்து கொள்வதால் சிற்பக்கலைத் துறை சார்ந்த கட்டுமான நுட்பம் அனைவருக்கும் தெரிந்திட வாய்ப்பாகும். இதனால் பாரம்பரியக் கட்டுமான நுட்பம் மற்றும் செய்திறன் வள்ளுவர் சிலை போல் ஓங்கி நிற்க, நிலைத்து நிற்க, மக்கள்தம் பாராட்டுப் பெற, அவர்தம் ஆதரவு பெற, 21ஆவது நூற்றாண்டிலும் வளர்ச்சியுற வாய்ப்பாகும்

என்றும் கருதலாம். இந்த நுட்பம் இந்த மரபில் 10 ஆயிரம் ஆண்டுகளைக் கடந்து வந்திட்ட நுட்பம் ஆகும்.

கட்டுமான உறுதிப்பாடு

அருகேயுள்ள பீடமும், சிலையும் சேர்ந்திட்ட படத்தைப் பார்த்தால் அதன் ஆதாரப்பீடம் ஓர் அடிப்படைக் கட்டடமாகவும் (38 அடி உயரம்) அதன்மீது நிற்கும் சிலையின் உடற்பகுதி (75 அடி உயரம்) பிறிதொரு கட்டடமாகவும், அக்கட்டடத்தின் மீது நிற்கும் தலைப்பகுதி மேலுமொரு கட்டடமாகவும் (20 அடி உயரம்) ஒன்றன்மீது ஒன்று ஏறிய மூன்று கட்டடங்களாகத் தோன்றும். இவ்வமைப்பை முதலில் கணித்துக் கொண்டு சிலையின் வடிவமைப்பு செய்துகொள்ளப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. அதாவது



வள்ளுவ மானங்கள்

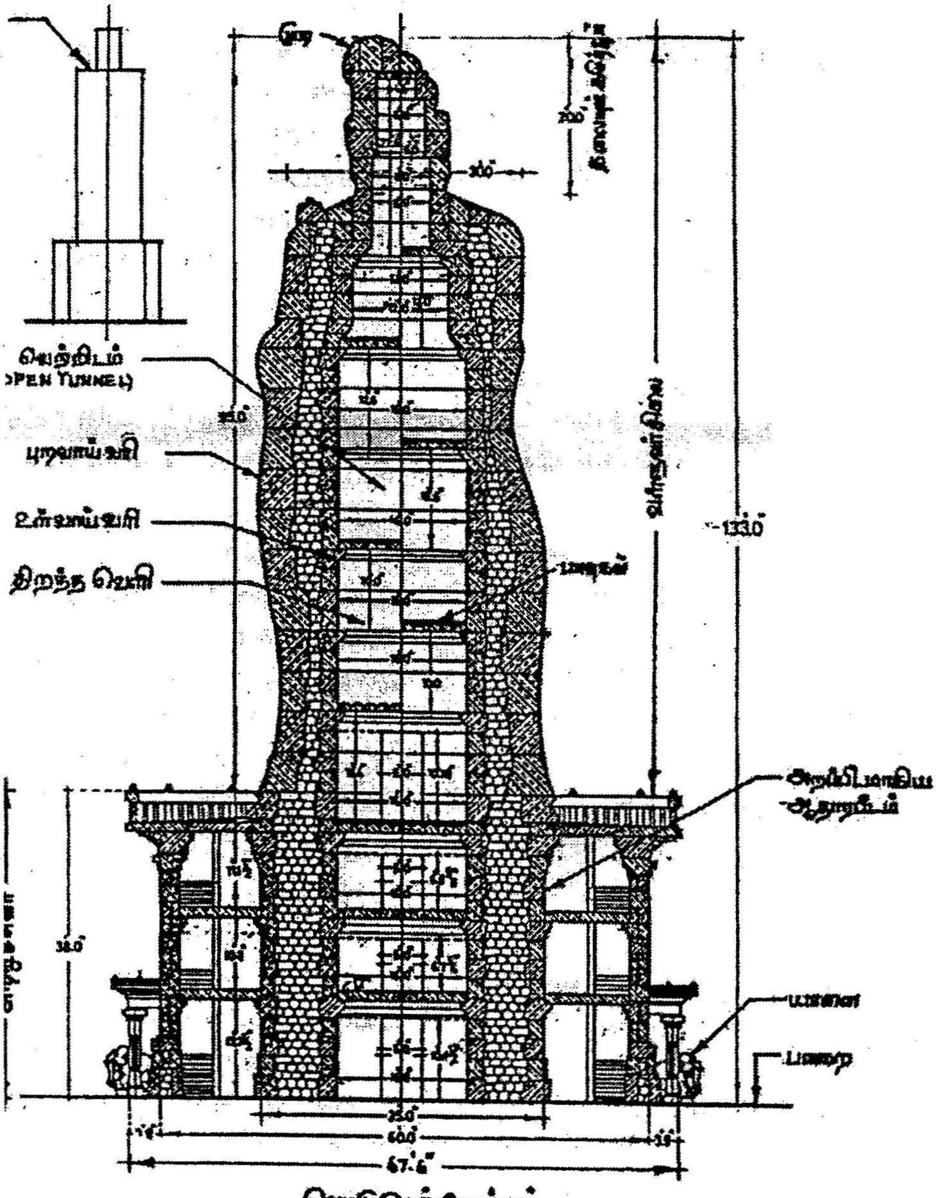
ஆதாரப்பீடக் கட்டடமானது உடற்பகுதிக் கட்டடத்தை அசைபாமல் தாங்கிடச் செய்ய வேண்டும். இறுதியில் தலைப்பகுதிக் கட்டடத்தைத் தோள் மீது உடல் நடுவே உறுதிப்பாடுடையதாய் நிறுத்தி வைத்திடலும் வேண்டும். இவை மூன்றும் ஒன்றோடு ஒன்று இணைந்து - ஒரே கட்டடமாகவும் - உறுதிப்பட நிற்கவும் வேண்டும். இவ்விணைப்பிற் குரிய ஆத்ம சக்தியை உருவாக்கித் தருவது மரபு விஞ்ஞான ஆற்றலாகும். இதுவே சிலையின் உறுதிப்பாட்டை நிர்ணயம் செய்திடும் அடிப்படைத் தொழில் நுட்பமும் (technological secret or scientific concept) ஆகும். இந்த நுட்பத்தை இங்கே காணலாம்.

மேலும், இத்தகைய கட்டட அமைப்பின் நடுவே அடிவாரத்தில் 8 அடி அகலமும் 16 அடி நீளமும் கொண்ட வெற்றிடம் ஒன்று (empty space) அமைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இது cosmic space அல்லது விண் எனப்படும். ஏன் நமது உடலும் உள்ளீடற்றதாகத் தானே இருக்கிறது? இதற்குள்ளேதான் உயிர்ப்புச் சக்தியொன்று தலை முதல் குய்யம் (தொடைகள் சந்திக்கும் இடம்) வரை தூக்காகத் (plumb) தொங்கி இயங்கும். இதோடு ஒத்துழைப்பது முதுகந்தண்டு ஆகும். இந்தத் தூக்கு நூலுக்கு ஒளி நூல் (thread of consciousness) என்று பெயர். உடலைத் தாங்கும் முதுகந்தண்டுக்குச் சக்தி கொடுப்பது இதுவே. இத்தகைய வெட்டவெளி (cosmic space) உடற்பகுதியின் மேல்மட்டம் வரை நேரே சென்று இடையே 6'.0" x 12'.0" மற்றும் 4'.0" x 8'.0" என அடுத்தடுத்துச் சுருங்கி இறுதியில், கழுத்து மட்டத்தில் 3.0" x 6'.0" கொண்ட வெற்றிடமாகக் குறுக்கப்பட்டு தலை உச்சியில் 3'.0" x 4'.0" அளவில் முடிவடைகிறது. இதிலேயும் ஒரு rhythm (காலமானம்) கையாளப்பட்டிருக்கிறதைக் காணலாம்.

இங்ஙனம் குறுக்கி அமைத்த உடலின் மேல்மட்டத்தில் தலையும் உள்ளீடற்றதாகக் (hollow like a tunnel) கட்டட நெறிமுறையொன்றால் கட்டுமானமாகி இருக்கிறது. அதாவது ஆதாரப் பீடத்தின் அடியில் நின்றுகொண்டு தலைநிமிர்த்திச் சிலையின் உட்பகுதியை நோக்கினால் அடி முதல் சிகரம் வரை ஒரு சீரான குகை (tunnel) போன்ற அமைப்பு தெரியவரும். இதனை ஆங்கிலத்தில் vertical cantilever (அ) vertical column என்று கூறலாம். இதற்கு மூலத்தூண் என்பது தமிழ்ப் பெயராகும். இந்த அமைப்பில் புகுத்தியிருக்கும் இந்தக் கட்டுமான நுட்பம் இங்கே குறிப்பிட்டுச் சொல்லத் தகுந்ததாகும்.

மேற்சொன்ன ஆதாரப்பீடம், சிலையின் உடற்பகுதி மற்றும் சிலையின் தலைப்பகுதி ஆகிய மூன்றையும் இணைப் பதற்குத் திராவிடக் கட்டுமானத் தொழில்நுட்ப நெறியொன்று செயல்படுத்தப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இந்த முறையானது கதலிகாகரணம் என்றும் corbelling technique என்றும் தண்டிகை என்றும் மரபில் சொல்லப்பட்டு வருகிறது. வாழை மரத் தண்டில் அதன் பட்டைகள் ஒன்றுக்குள் ஒன்றாக அமைவுற்று மரத்திற்கு வலுவூட்டி நிற்பதுபோல இந்த நெறிமுறையைத் தழுவிச் செய்திடும் கட்டுமான நுட்பம் கதலிகாகரணம் என்று பெயர் பெறுவதாயிற்று. 'வாழை மரத்தின் அமைப்பியலில் செய்தல்

என்பது கதலிகாகரணம் என்ற சொல்லின் பொருளாகும். இத்தகைய கட்டுமானத்தில் தமிழகச் சிற்பிகள் வல்லுநர்கள் என்பதைக் கட்டுமான நெறிமுறை தெரிந்தோர் சொல்லுவர். இந்த முறையை மெக்னிகோ மாயர் தம் கட்டட நிர்மாணத்தில் காணலாம்.



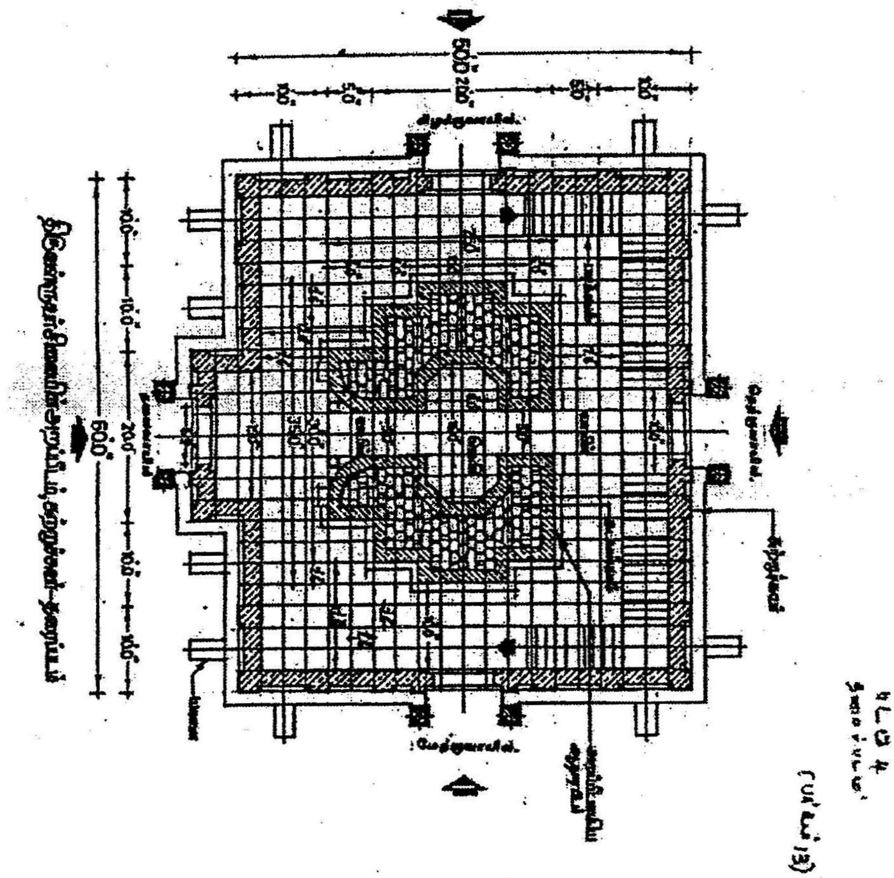
வெட்டுமுகத் தோற்றம்

இத்தகைய கட்டுமான நெறிமுறை புகுத்தப்பட்டு வெற்றிகரமாக இன்றளவும் அசையாமல் உறுதியாக நிற்கும் நுட்பத்தை - உண்மையை - சிறப்பை - 216 அடி உயரம் கொண்ட தஞ்சைப் பெருவுடையார் கோயில் விமானக் கட்டுமானத்தில் காணலாம். இதே கதலிகாகரணத்தைச் செங்கல்லால் கட்டப்படும் வானுயர்ந்த விமானங்களிலும் கோபுரங்களிலும் காணலாம். கல்லால் கட்டினாலும், செங்கல்லால் கட்டினாலும் இதற்குரிய அளவுமுறை, நெறிமுறை, செய்முறை பொதுவானதே ஆகும்.

8 அடி அகலமும், 16 அடி நீளமும் கொண்ட இந்தக் குகையின் அமைப்பு ஆதார பீடத்தின் அடிமட்டத்திலிருந்து (ground floor) உடற்பகுதியின் 55ஆவது அடி வரை கொண்டு போகப் பட்டிருக்கிறது. அதன் பிறகு கதலிகாகரணச் செய்முறையானது உடலின் உட்பகுதிக்குள் மேல்நோக்கிச் சென்று, தலையைத் தாங்கும் முதுகந்தண்டு போல - சாய்வுற்று - சிறிதே வளைவுற்றுச் சென்று கழுத்தைத் தாங்கிப் பிடிக்கிறது. கழுத்தின் அடிப்பாகம் வரை செல்லும் இத்தகைய கட்டுமான முறையினால் தோளின் மேல்மட்டம் உறுதியாகிறது. அதாவது 11'.6" x 12'.6" பரப்புடைய தலைப்பகுதியாகிய கட்டடம் நிற்பதற்குத் தோள் மட்டத்தில் 13'.0" x 13'.0" அளவில் செய்திட்ட இந்தத் தொழில்நுட்பத்தால் தலைநிற்கத் தகுந்த ஓர் அஸ்திவாரமாகவே அமைந்து விடுகிறது.

மேலும், இக்கட்டடங்கள் தூக்கு நூலுக்கு (Plumb) ஒத்து நிற்கிறதா என்று சோதனை செய்திட இந்தக் குகையின் உள் அமைப்பு (inner rhythm) பேருதவியாக இருப்பதோடு மேடு பள்ளங்கள் வளைவு சுழிவுகள் கொண்ட சிலையின் வெளிப்புறத்தே (outer features of human body) தூக்கினை (Plumb) ஏற்றிப் பணி செய்வதற்கும் பேருதவியாய் இருப்பதாகிறது.

அதாவது இந்தக் குகைப் பகுதியானது தூக்குக்கு (Plumb) ஒத்து நிற்பதோடு சுற்றிலுமுள்ள உடல் பகுதியின் கட்டுமானத்தையும் செங்குத்தாக அமையச் செய்தது, Stability எனப்படும் உறுதிப்பாட்டைக் கண் முன்னாலேயே சரி செய்து காட்டிவிடுகிறது. இஃதொரு பெரிய விஞ்ஞான விந்தையும் தொழில்நுட்ப யுக்தியுமாகும். இத்தகைய யுக்தியைக் கையாண்டே 213 அடி உயரங்கொண்ட திருவரங்கக் கோபுரத்திற்கு இக் கட்டுரையாளர் (ஸ்தபதி) வடிவமைத்துக் கொடுத்து, அங்ஙனமே



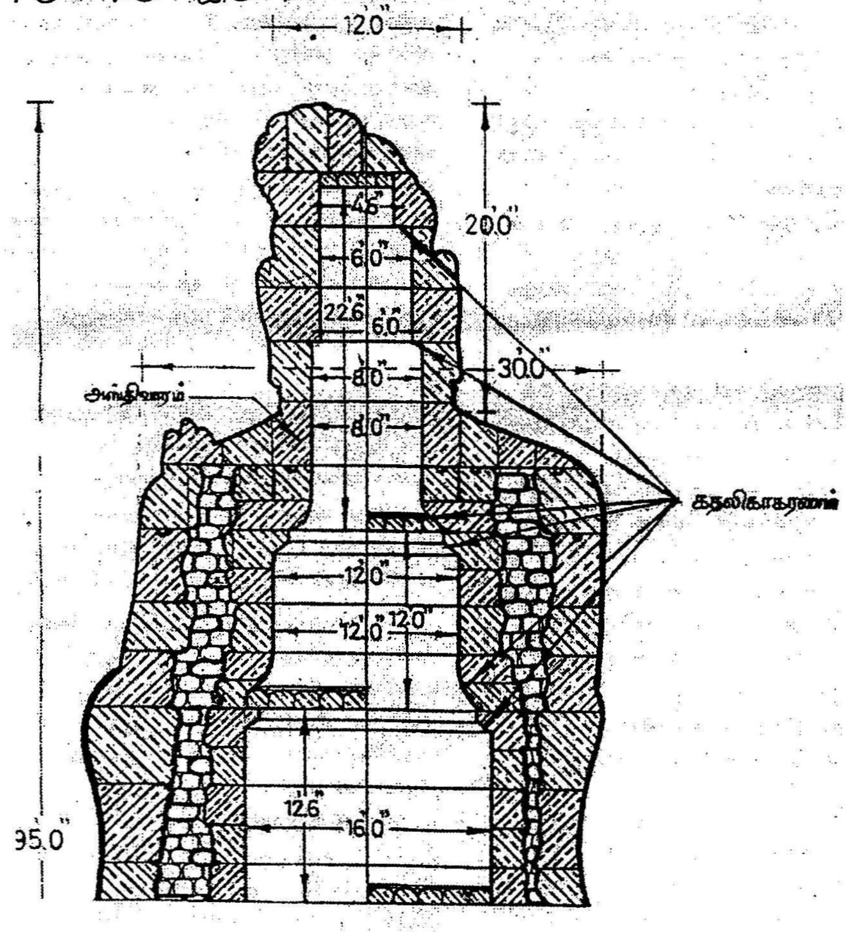
சிற்பிகள் கட்டுமானப் பணி செய்து, சிகரமாம் கோபுரத்தின் தலை இன்றளவும் உறுதிப்பட நிற்கிறது என்ற செய்தி இங்கே குறிப்பிட்டுச் சொல்லத்தக்கதாம். மரபுச் சிற்பிகள் தாங்கள் படைத்திடும் ஒவ்வொரு பொருளையும் உயிர்ப்புள்ள பொருளாகவே பார்க்கிறார்கள். அமைக்கிறார்கள். இது சிற்ப விஞ்ஞானம் காட்டியதொரு தொழில்நுட்பமாகும். திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையும் இந்த நுட்பத்தைப் பெறுவதால் இஃதும் ஓர் உயிர்ப் பொருளாகிறது (அ) vibrant organism ஆகிறது.

இத்தகைய உறுதிப்பாட்டை உருவாக்குவதற்கு மேலுமொரு நுட்பம் திராவிடக் கட்டுமானக் கலையில் (Dravidian technology) பின்பற்றப்படுகிறது. அதாவது, ஆதாரப்பீடம், சிலையின் காலும் உடலும் சேர்ந்த பகுதி. இவ்விரண்டும் ஒற்றைக்கல் சுவராக இல்லாமல் இரட்டைச் சுவர் கொண்ட (double walled structure) கட்டடமாகக் கட்டப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

இந்த இரட்டைச் சுவரானது அடிவாரத்திலிருந்து தோள்மட்டம் வரை தொடர்ந்து அமையலாகிறது. பளுவைக் குறைத்திடத் தலைப்பகுதி மட்டும் ஒற்றைக்கல் சுவராக உள்ளது. இந்த இரட்டைச் சுவர்களுக்கிடையே ஏற்படும் இடைவெளியைக் (கடகால்) கட்டுக்கற்களால் நிரப்பிக் 'கட்டாயம்' என்று சொல்லப்படும் பாண்டுகளை இடையிடையே செருகி, உட்சுவரும் வெளிச்சுவரும் தோள்மட்டம் வரைக்கும் உறுதி கொண்டதாய்ச் செய்யப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இத்தகைய இரட்டைச் சுவர் கொண்ட கட்டுமானத்தில் சுவர்கள் அபரிமிதமான உறுதிப்பாட்டைப் பெற்றுவிடுகின்றன. இத்தகைய உறுதிப்பாட்டில் தலைப்பகுதியும் சேர்ந்துவிடுவதால் சிலையின் ஒட்டுமொத்த அமைப்பு உறுதி பெற்று விடுகிறது. சுருக்கிச் சொன்னால் இரட்டைச் சுவர் கொண்ட இச்சிலை இத்தகைய கட்டுமானத்தினால் உறுதிபெற்றுவிடுவதை விடுத்துத் தலைப்பகுதிக் கட்டடத்தையும் உறுதியோடு இணைத்து நிற்க இடமளித்துவிடுகிறது. ஒரே கல்லில் குகையும், குகையைச் சூழ்ந்துள்ள உடற்பகுதிகளும் செதுக்கப்படுமானால் எங்ஙனம் உறுதிப்பாட்டோடு விளங்குமோ அங்ஙனம் நிரந்தர உறுதிப் பாட்டோடு இச்சிலை நிற்கும் என்பது கருத்து. தலை உட்பகுதியில் செய்திட்ட கதலிகாகரணம் தலை அசைவற்று நிற்பதற்கேற்ற உறுதிப்பாட்டையும் பெற்று விடுகின்றது. கீழுள்ள படத்தைப் பார்த்தால் இந்த நெறிமுறை விளக்கமுறும்.

இங்ஙனம் செய்து, மேற்குறிப்பிட்ட குகை (tunnel) வழியாக lift ஒன்றையும் வைக்கலாம் என்பது தொடக்ககாலத் திட்டமாக இருந்தது. இடைக்காலத்தில் இத்திட்டம் கைவிடப்பட்டது. காரணம் இந்த lift-ன் மூலம் பார்வையாளர்கள், மற்றும் சிறுவர் சிறுமியர் ஏறிச்சென்று வருவது விளையாட்டாக அமைந்துவிடும் என்றும், பல அபாயங்களுக்குக் காரணமாகி விடும் என்றும், திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையை ஒரு புனிதச் சின்னமாகப் பாவித்திட வேண்டுமென்றும், கருத்துக்கொண்டு lift வைப்பது தவிர்க்கப்படலாயிற்று. என்றாலும், இஃது ஏன் இங்குக் குறிப்பிடப்படுகிறது எனில், குகை வழியே lift-ஐப் பொருத்தி இயக்குவதற்குரிய உறுதிப் பாட்டோடு இந்தச் சிலைப் பகுதியின் கட்டுமானம் ஏற்கெனவே நடந்துவிட்டது. ஆகவே, இந்தக் கட்டுமானம் lift-ஐயும் அதன் இயக்கத்தினால் ஏற்படும் அசைவையும் தாங்கி நிற்கும் வலுவுடையது என்ற கருத்து இங்கே குறிப்பிடப்படுகிறது. இப்போது lift வைக்கப்படவில்லை. இனிமேல் வைக்கவும் இயலாது.

என்றாலும் உள்ளீடற்ற (hollow structure) இச்சிலையை மேலும் உறுதி செய்திட, சிலையின் உட்பகுதியில் 10 அடிக்கு ஒருமுறை பாவுக்கற்களைத் (covering stones) தளமாக அமைத்து, தன்னந்தனியே நிற்கும் சுவர்களை இணைத்து, உறுதி செய்யப் பட்டிருக்கிறது. இதே நேரத்தில் சிலையின் உட்பகுதியில் நீர்க் கசிவுகளோ, தேன்கூடுகளோ, பறவைக் கூடுகளோ ஏற்படுமானால் அவற்றை அப்புறப்படுத்தவும் பிற்காலத்தில் மராமத்துச் செய்திடவும் அடித்தளத்திலிருந்து மேல் தளங்களுக்குச் செல்வதற்கு ஏற்றவாறு இடைவெளியும் விடப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. ஏணியின் மூலமே மேலே சென்றிட வேண்டும். தரைமட்டத்திலிருந்து ஆதாரப் பீடத்தின் மேல்மட்டம் வரை ஏறிச் செல்லத் (38 அடி உயரம் வரை) தக்க படிக்கட்டுகளும் அங்கிருந்து சிலைக்குள்ளே நுழைந்திடச் சிலையின் பின்புறத்திலே ஒரு வாயிலும் வைக்கப் பட்டிருக்கிறது. இதுவும் வேண்டாமெனில் நீக்கிவிடலாம்.



கதலிகாகரணமும் தம்பியின் அஸ்திவாரமும்

சிலையை ஏறிப்பார்க்காமல் கரையில் நின்று பார்ப்பதே பொருந்தும் என்ற நல்லதொரு கருத்தும் அறிஞரிடையே இப்போது நிலவிவருகிறது.

மேலுமொரு நுட்பத்தையும் இங்கே சேர்த்துச் சொல்லுதல் தகுமெனக் கருதலாகிறது. அதாவது, ஆதாரப்பீடத்தையும், சிலையையும் சுற்றி 38 அடி உயரங் கொண்ட அலங்காரமான (architectural wall) சுவர் ஒன்றும் கட்டப்பட்டிருக்கின்றது. இதுவும் 3 டன் முதல் 6 டன் வரையுள்ள துண்டுக் கற்களால் கட்டப்பெற்று உறுதி மிகுந்த சுவராக விளங்குகிறது. இச்சுவரையும் ஆதாரப் பீடத்தையும் பாவுக்கற்கள் (covering stones) கொண்டு இணைத்துத் தளம் (floors) அமைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இப்போது ஆதாரப் பீடத்தைச் சுற்றியமைந்த மண்டபமாகக் காட்சி தருகிறது. இங்ஙனம் மூன்று தளங்கள் (floors) கொண்டதாயுள்ள இக்கட்டடமானது சிலையினை அசையாது மேலும் காத்திட buttress wall போல முட்டுக் கொடுத்து நிற்கிறது எனலாம். கடல் கோள்கள் நிகழ்ந்தாலும் சிலை அசையாது நிற்க வேண்டுமென்ற கருத்திலே இங்ஙனம் செய்துளது.

மேலும், பொதுமக்கள் ஆதாரப் பீடத்தைச் சுற்றி வரவும், பொறிக்கப்பட்டுள்ள குறட்பாக்களை நின்று படித்துப் பார்க்கவும் இக்கட்டடமானது மண்டபமாகவும் விளங்கும். இங்கே, நான்கு வாயில்கள் இருக்கின்றன. இந்த மண்டபத்தின் அளவுகளும் 10இன் மடங்கினதாகவே (Rhythm) அமைந்து அழகிய தோற்றம் தருவதோடு, கட்டடப் பகுதிகளின் உறுதிப்பாட்டிற்கும் (homogeneity of structural parts) பேருதவியாகவும் விளங்குகிறது.

மேலும், அதிமுக்கியமான தொழில்நுட்பப் பிரச்சினைகள் இரண்டு உள. அதாவது, தலைப்பகுதியைப் பாவுக்கற்கள் கொண்டு மூடிய பிறகு ஐந்து அடி உயரமுடையதும், பின்பக்கம் சரிந்து முகத்துக்கு எழிலூட்டும் பாவனையில் மீண்டும் துண்டுக் கற்களைக் கொண்டு தலைமுடியை மகுடமாய் அமைத்து, உறுதிப்படுத்த வேண்டியது முதற்பிரச்சினையாகும். இந்த நிலையில் மரச்சட்டங்களுக்கு மர ஆணி செய்து மரச்சட்டங்களைப் பொருத்துவது போன்று கல்லால் ஆன, உறுதி மிகுந்த ஆணிகளைத் தைத்து, அத்துணைக் கற்களையும் இணைத்து வைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கின்றது. இஃதொரு சாதனை எனலாம். இரும்பாலோ, செம்பாலோ காங்கிரீட்டாலோ எந்தப் பிணைப்பும் செய்திடவில்லை. முற்றிலும் கல்லால் ஓரினப்பட்ட பொருள்கள்

கொண்டே (homogenous material) கட்டுமானம் அமைத்தல் வேண்டுமென்ற திட்டத்திற்கேற்ப இந்த யுக்தியானது வெற்றிகரமாக நிகழ்ந்துள்ளது.

மேலும், ஏடு பிடித்திட்ட கையும், முப்பால் முத்திரை காட்டிய கையும் உடலோடு சேர்த்து வைத்து உறுதிபடக் கட்டுதல் வேண்டுமென்பது இரண்டாவது பிரச்சினையாகும். இரண்டு கைகளும் சிலையின் மார்பிலிருந்து 5 அடி தூரம் முன்போக்கி விலகி நிற்பனவாகும். இதற்கு cantilever என்று ஆங்கிலத்தில் சொல்லப்படும் யுக்தி கையாளப்பட்டது. இதற்குத் தண்டிகை என்பது தமிழ்ப் பெயர். ஏட்டின் நீளம் மட்டும் 10 அடி ஆகும். இதனைக் கையிலும் ஏந்தியுள்ளது சிலை. இதற்கென 13 அடி நீளமுள்ள பெரியதொரு கல்லை உடலிலே செருகிக் கல்லின் முன்வாயில் கையையும் ஏட்டையும் செதுக்கி வைத்து உறுதிப் படுத்தியிருக்கிறது. அத்தகைய யுக்தியைக் கையாண்டு 10 அடி உயரமுள்ள முப்பால் முத்திரை பிடித்த கையும் உறுதி செய்யப் பட்டிருக்கிறது.

இச்சிலையின் இடுப்புவரை இயல்பாய் அமையும் பலவீனத்தைப் போக்கிட இடுப்பில் உடுத்திய ஆடைகளைப் பக்கவாட்டிலும் முன்புறத்திலும் எழில் குன்றாமல் விரித்து அமைத்தும், பின்புறத்தில் ஆசனமொன்றைச் செதுக்கி அவ்வாசனத்தின் முன்புறத்தே சிலை நிற்பதாகக் காட்டியும் சிலையின் பாதிப்பகுதி தக்க அகலமும் நீளமும் பருமனும் கொண்டதாய் - அடி பெருத்ததாய் - சுமார் 40 அடி உயரம் வரை உறுதியாக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இச்சிலையின் அடி அகலம் 25 அடியாகவும் நீளம் 35 அடியாகவும் தோள் மட்டத்தில் 15 அடி அகலமும் 300 அடி நீளமும் கொண்டதாகும்.

இத்தகைய பிரச்சினைகள் நிரம்பிய இச்சிலையின் கட்டுமானத்தின் இரும்போ பிற உலோகமோ, காங்கிரீட்டோ சேர்க்கப்படவில்லை என்பது இங்கே குறிப்பிடத்தக்கதாகும்.

இதற்கப்பாலும் மேலுமொரு நுட்பம் இந்தச் சிலைக் கட்டுமான நெறியில் உளதென்பதும் இங்குக் குறிப்பிடப்படுகிறது. சிலையின் ஆதாரப்பீடமும், சிலையும், சுற்றுச்சுவரும் 3681 துண்டுக் கற்கள் கொண்டு (7000 டன்) கட்டுமானமாக அமைக்கப்பட்ட செய்தி ஏற்கெனவே குறிப்பிடப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. எனினும் இத்தகைய துண்டுக் கற்களைச் சாந்தின் மீது செங்கல்லை அடுக்கடுக்காய் வைத்துக் கட்டுவது போல் அல்லாமல் ஒவ்வொரு

கல்லையும் நீர்மட்டத்திற்கும், தூக்குக்கும் (spirit and plumb) சரிபார்த்து, அங்ஙனமே ஒவ்வொரு வரிசையையும் (layer or course) சரிபார்த்து, அதாவது ஒவ்வொரு கல்லும் ஒவ்வொரு வரிசையும் (course) பிணைப்புற்று உறுதிபட நிற்பதற்கேற்ற கட்டுமான நுட்பமும் (anchorage) இங்குக் கையாளப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இதற்குக் "கடிப்பு" என்பது தமிழ்ப்பெயர்.

அதாவது, ஒவ்வொரு கல்லும் தனக்குக் கீழுள்ள கல்லைக் கடித்து நிற்குமாறு (anchorage) ஒவ்வொரு கல்லின் அடிமட்டமும் (bottom) எசையும் (vertical joints) செதுக்கப் பெற்றுச் சேர்மானம் செய்யப்பட்டிருக்கின்றது. இப்படித்தான் கல்லால் ஆன கட்டடங்களில் ஒருமித்த உறுதிப்பாடு (homogeneity and stability) ஏற்றப்படுவதாகிறது. சாந்து வைத்தல் என்பது சந்துகளை அடைப்பதற்காகவேயொழிய, கற்களைப் பிடித்துக்கொள்வதற்காக அல்ல. கற்களுக்குக் கொண்டிட்ட அளவுகளும், அவற்றின் பளுவும் (3 முதல் 8 டன்) மேலும் சிலைக்கு உறுதி சேர்ப்பதாகின்றன. சுருங்கச் சொன்னால் இச்சிலையானது பாறை மீது நிற்கும் பிறிதொரு பாறையாக, (rock on rock) பாறையையே செதுக்கி நிறுத்திய சிலை போல அமைந்திருக்கிறது எனலாம்.

கற்களை இணைப்பதற்கு sulphur resistant சிமெண்டுச் சாந்து கொண்ட சாந்து பதிந்து (grouted) இணைப்புகள் மூடப் பட்டுள்ளன (sealed). துண்டுக் கற்களால் ஆன சிலையாகையால் மழை நீர் தலை வழியாகவும் தோள் வழியாகவும் சிலை உட்பகுதியில் வடிந்திடக்கூடுமாதலால் epoxite என்ற இரசாயனச் சாந்து கொண்டு, தேவையான இணைப்புக்களை grout செய்து seal பண்ணி நீர் ஒழுக்கும் தவிர்க்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இதற்கும் மேலாக polysilicon என்ற transparent இரசாயனக் கலவை சிலைமீது பூசப்பட்டுள்ளது. இதனால் சிலைமீது உப்புக்காற்றுப்பட்டு சிலையை அரித்துவிடாது தடுக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

இத்தகைய சிமெண்டுச் சாந்துகள் எதிர்வரும் காலத்தில் உதிர்ந்துவிட்டாலும் ஒவ்வொரு கல்லும் உறுதிப்பாட்டோடு சேர்மானம் செய்யப்பட்டிருப்பதால் சிலைக்கற்கள் நகர்வதற்கோ, சிதிலமடைவதற்கோ இடமில்லை எனலாம். அலையும் மலையும் இருக்கும்வரை இச்சிலை நிலைத்து நிற்பதற்கு ஏற்ப உறுதியான கட்டுமான நுட்பங்கள் கையாளப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன என்பது வலியுறுத்தப்படுகிறது.

இவற்றைச் சோதித்ததோடு எல்லாவற்றையும் தாங்கி நிற்கும் பாறையும் உறுதி மிக்கது என்பதைப் பொதுப்பணித்துறைக் கட்டுமானப் பொறியாளர்கள் ஆய்வு செய்து இச்சிலை எக் காலத்தும் எந்தகைய சூழ்நிலையிலும் நிற்கும் உறுதிப்பாடு உடையதெனச் சான்றும் பகன்றிருக்கிறார்கள்.

தொடக்கக் காலத்தில், சிலைக்கான வரைபடங்களைக் கொடுத்து, கட்டுமான நுட்பங்களையும் சொல்லி, இச்சிலையின் உறுதிப்பாடு பற்றி ஆய்வும் விளக்கமும், யோசனையும் தருமாறு ஒரு நிபுணரிடம் கோரப்பட்டது. Heavy structure பற்றிய வடிவமைப்பு நுட்பங்களைத் தெரிந்தவரும் அனுபவம் உள்ளவருமான திரு. குருசாமி, B.E., M.Sc., (Struct.), FIE., Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Retd.), Chartered Engineer and Consultant, Chennai அவர்களின் ஆய்வுக் குறிப்புரையின் (Remarks) சாரத்தை அப்படியே அவர் எழுதிக் கொடுத்தபடிக் கீழே காணலாம். இதன் நகல் அரசிடமும் உளது.

> *In conclusion, it will be necessary for me to place on record the fact that the proportioning of the statue is a fine piece of Engineering skill. The stone courses are so designed that the Centre of Gravity of each course is nearly in alignment. The use of granite ensures a very stable vertical cantilever. Due to the inherent weight of granite, it cannot be swayed or toppled by horizontal forces like wind loads, the effect of which is really negligible. Only under an earthquake of 10% horizontal acceleration the normal compression reaches 16 tons per sq.ft. Resistance to sliding and shearing is excellent, the granite surfaces being dressed rough in the interior contact surfaces though the edges are fine chiselled to ensure proper fit. Resistance to weather is ofcourse well known as borne out by our ancient temple Gopurams and needs no further emphasis. The design of the statue bears ample testimony to the Engineering and Architectural expertise of our forefathers handed down to generation after generation of our Sthapatis*

வள்ளுவர் சிலைக்கு உபயோகப்படுத்திய கற்களின் பளு தாங்கும் சக்தியை (Compressive strength) ஆய்வு செய்து வழங்கிய அண்ணா பல்கலைக்கழக Building Technology Centre-ன் நற்சான்றின் சாரம் பின்வருமாறு:

> **சிலைக்குப் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்ட கற்கள் சதுர அடிக்கு 630 முதல் 750 டன் வரை தாங்கும் சக்தியுடையன**

என்பதாகும். அதாவது, கற்கள் மிக உறுதயானவை என்பது கருத்தாகிறது. இதனைக் குறைத்து மதிப்பிட்டால் (factor of safety 4) தாங்கும் திறன் 155 முதல் 185 டன் வரை ஆகுமென்பது பொருளாகிறது.

மேலே குறிப்பிட்ட பொறியாளர் பீ. குருசாமி அவர்களின் ஆய்வுக் கணக்குப்படி சிலையின் ஒவ்வொரு அடுக்கும் அழுத்தும் சக்தி (maximum compressive stress) அதிகபட்சம் சதுர அடிக்கு 7 டன்னாக உள்ளது. எனவே, சிலையும் பீடமும் மலை மீது உறுதியுடன் நிற்கும் என்பது தெளிவு.

சிற்பியர் ஆற்றிய பணிகள்

ஒரே கல்லால் அல்லது ஒரே பாறையில் சிற்பங்களைச் செதுக்கியோ, மலைகளைக் குடைந்து கட்டடங்களைச் செதுக்கி அமைத்தலிலோ யாதொரு வியப்புமில்லை. அப்படிச் செய்தல் மிக மிக எளிதே. உடல் உழைப்பும், நீண்ட காலமும், அதிகப் பொருட் செலவுமே இதற்குத் தேவையாகும். ஆனால் பல துண்டுக் கற்களைக் கொண்டு திருவள்ளுவர் சிலைபோல் வானுயர்ந்து நிற்கும், சிலையாகக் கட்டுவதும், அதற்கான கற்களை இணைத்து விரும்பிய வண்ணம் முழு வடிவமாக (round figure) உருப்பெறச் செய்வதும் மிகமிகக் கடினம். இதில் கடின உழைப்பு, அதிகக் கால அளவு, பொருட்செலவு ஆகியவற்றோடு கணக்குப்படி செதுக்குவதும், சேர்ப்பதும் (mathematical precision) பிறிதொரு பிரச்சினையாகும்.

தரை மட்டத்திலே இத்தகைய பணியைச் செம்மையாகச் செய்திடலாம். ஆனால் இதனை அலைமோதும் கடல்மீது, 3 டன் முதல் 8 டன் வரையிலான செதுக்குக் கற்களைப் படகிலேற்றி, Jettyயில் இறக்கி, அங்கிருந்து 30 அடி உயரப் பாறை மீது கிரேன் கொண்டு தூக்கி வைத்து, அங்ஙனம் கொண்டு சேர்த்திட்ட செதுக்கிய கற்களை 133 அடி வரை - ஆட்சேதம், பொருட்

சேதமில்லாமல் தூக்கிச் சென்று சேர்மானம் செய்திடல் என்பது மிகமிகக் கடினம். இத்தகைய இடர்ப்பாடுகளைத் தவிர்த்திடவே தஞ்சைப் பெருவுடையார் கோவில் கட்டுமானத்திற்கு மண்சாரம் ramp, அமைத்து அதையே தாங்கு சுவராகவும் (retaining wall) கொண்டு பணி முடிக்கப்பெற்ற செய்தியை வரலாற்று ஏடுகள் வியப்புடன் எடுத்துரைக்கும்.

இங்ஙனம் செய்திட வள்ளுவர் பாறையில் இடவசதியே யில்லை. எனவே இதற்கு மாற்றாகவும் சாதகமாகவும் சவுக்கு மரம், பனை மரம் ஆகியவை கொண்டே 150 அடி உயரத்திற்கு (இது கடல் மட்டத்திலிருந்து 180 அடி உயரமாகும்) மரச் சாரம் அமைத்து, அந்தச் சாரமானது 3 டன் முதல் 8 டன் வரையிலான கற்களைத் தாங்கிக் கொள்ளத்தக்கவாறு கனமான பலகைகளைக் குறுக்கிலும் நெடுக்கிலும் தளமாக அமைத்து, உறுதிசெய்து, அக்கற்களை அவற்றின் மீது வைத்து, கடப்பாறை கொண்டு நகர்த்திச் சிலையையும், சிலையின் தலையையும் உறுதிபடக் கட்டி அமைப்பது மெத்த மெத்தக் கடினம் என்று சொன்னால் கிஞ்சிற்றும் மிகையல்ல. இதற்காக மேற்கொண்ட யுக்தியும் பணிகளும் உழைப்பும் அளவிடவொண்ணாததாகும்.

இதில் பணியாற்றிய அத்துணைப் பேரும் உழைப்பின் சிகரத்திற்கே போய்விட்டார்கள் என்று சொல்லலாம். இரவும் பகலும் இக்கடினப்பணிகள் நிகழ்ந்தன. இது மட்டுமா எனில், இத்துணைப் பணிகளைச் செய்யும்போது ஏற்படும் அபாயங்களையும், இடர்ப்பாடுகளையும் வென்று, இயற்கையின் சீற்றங்களையும் தாங்கிக்கொண்டு, அரசு கொடுத்திட்ட காலவரையறைக்குள் முடித்துக் கொடுப்பதென்பது வரலாறு காணா அனுபவமும் வெற்றியுமாகும். 95 அடி உயரமுள்ள இச்சிலையின் நிர்மாணம் 1 வருடம் 7 நாட்களுக்குள் முடிந்துளது என்ற செய்தி பலரின் வியப்பைப் பெறுவதாயிற்று. இத்தகைய பின்னணியில் முற்றிலும் கடினமான கருங்கற்களால் கட்டுமான நெறி முறைப்படி உறுதி செய்திட்ட - உலகத்திலேயே மிக உயரமான சிலை திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையே என்று துணிந்து கூறலாம். இதனை உலக அதிசயங்களில் ஒன்றாக - மதிப்பீடும் செய்திடலாம்.

சிற்பியர் மற்றும் பல் துறையினர்க்குப் பாராட்டுரைகள்

இதனைச் சாதித்திடச் சொல்லொணா ஆர்வமும் அக்கறையும் கொண்டு, அயரா உழைப்பை நல்கியோர்

கல்லுடைக்கும் தொழிலாளர்கள் முதல் மலை மீது மலை எழுப்பிய சிற்பியர் வரை 500 பேர் ஆவர். அத்தகைய ஒவ்வொருவரும் பாராட்டுக்குரியவர். எனினும், குறிப்பாகச் சொன்னால், சிலை செதுக்கும் பணியையும், கட்டும் பணியையும் நேரிடையாக மேற்கொண்ட ஸ்தபதியர், உதவிச் சிற்பியர் மற்றும் சாரம் அமைத்துக் கொடுத்த தொழிலாளர்கள் கற்களைச் சிதற விடாது - சிதைத்திடாது - படகில் ஏற்றிச் சென்ற படகு ஓட்டுநர் மற்றும் அவர்தம் துணைவர்கள் - கரை சேர்த்திட்ட கற்களை கிரேன் மூலம் மலை ஏற்றிய கிரேன் ஓட்டுநர் மற்றும் பணியாளர்கள், மலையேறிய கற்களைச் சேர்மானம் செய்து உறுதியும் உருவும் கொடுத்திட்ட சேர்மானச் சிற்பியர்கள் அனைவரும் பாராட்டுக்குரியவர்களாகிறார்கள். மேலும் ஒவ்வொன்றும் 3 டன் முதல் 8 டன் வரை எடையுள்ள கற்களை, மலையைப் பிளந்து, வெட்டியெடுத்துத் தந்த பாரம்பரிய ஆற்றலும் அனுபவமும் நுட்பமும் தெரிந்த சிற்பிகளும் பாறைத் தொழிலாளர்களும் இப்பாராட்டுக்கு உரியவர்களே.

அரசிடமிருந்து அவ்வப்போது நிதி பெற்றுச் செலவுகளைச் சிக்கனமாகச் செய்து, பணிகள் தொய்வுறா வண்ணம் கண்காணித்து, சிற்பியர்தம் செய்ஊதியங்களை அவ்வப்போது தொய்வின்றி வழங்கி, பணப்பொறுப்பும் வகித்து, அன்றாடக் கணக்கெழுதி மேலாளரின் ஒப்பமும் பெற்று மாதா மாதம் செலவினப் பட்டியலும் மேலாளருக்கு அனுப்பிக் காலத் தொய்வில்லாமல் சுறுசுறுப்போடு அனைத்துப் பணிகளையும் செம்மையாகச் செய்திட்ட அரசு ஊழியர் திரு. ஏ. திருநீலகண்டன் மற்றும் திரு. எஸ். போரூரான் ஆகிய இருவர் இப்பணியின் வெற்றிக்கு அருந்துணையாய் இருந்தார்கள். அவர்களும் நெஞ்சார்ந்த பாராட்டுக்குரியோர் ஆகிறார்கள்.

கடற்கரையிலிருந்து மலை அடிவாரத்துக்குக் கற்களை படகின் மூலம் கடத்திச் சென்று, கிரேன் மூலம் 30 அடி உயரப் பாறை மீது ஏற்றி இறக்கி வைக்கும் பணியை வெற்றிகரமாக முடித்துக் கொடுத்திட்ட தமிழ்நாடு கட்டுமானக் கழக இயக்குநர்கள், உடனிருந்து உதவிய பொறியாளர்கள் நன்றிக்கும் பாராட்டுக்கும் உரியவர்களாகிறார்கள்.

மேற்சொன்ன அத்துணைப் பணிகளுக்கும் ஏற்ற பெரிய பெரிய கற்களைக் கொண்டு வந்து, மூன்று இடங்களில் பட்டறை அமைத்துச் செதுக்கி வைத்த கற்களை அளந்து பார்த்து,

திட்டமிட்டபடி பணி நடப்பதாக அரசுக்குத் தெரிவித்து, கன்னியாகுமரியில் நடைபெற்று வந்த சேர்மானப் பணிகளையும் சரிபார்த்து, அரசிடமிருந்து நிதி பெறத் தகுந்த பரிந்துரை செய்து, சிலைப் பணிகளையும் உற்றுநோக்கி, பணியின் பளுவறிந்து, சிற்பியரை ஊக்குவித்து, பண இடர்ப்பாடின்றித் துரித நடையில் இப்பணி நிறைவு பெறப் பேருதவியாக இருந்த PWD வல்லுநர் குழுவினர் பெருமதிப்பிற்கும் நன்றிக்கும் உரியவர்களாகிறார்கள்.

இச்சிலை நிறுவும் பணி செம்மையாக நடந்தேறியதை உற்றுப்பார்த்து, இதற்குத் தயாரித்திருந்த வரைபடங்களையும் (measured designs and drawings) மரத்தாலான மாதிரி உருவத்தையும் ஆய்வுசெய்து, இடைக்காலத்தில் நடைபெற்ற சேர்மானப் பணிகளையும் உற்றுநோக்கி, structural analysis செய்து இந்தச் சிலை உறுதியுடன் எக்காலத்தும் நிற்கும் (structural stability) என்று மகிழ்ச்சியுடன் தெரிவித்த தமிழக அரசின் பொதுப்பணித்துறைக் கண்காணிப்புப் பொறியாளர் (Planning and Designs (B) Circle) அவர்களுக்கும், இப்பொருள் தொடர்புடைய வல்லுநர் குழு உறுப்பினர்களுக்கும், மேலும் (24.11.99) பொதுப்பணித் துறைப் பொறியாளர்களுடன் நேரே பாறைக்கு வந்து சிலையையும், கட்டுமான நுட்பத்தையும் உற்றறிந்து, வாயாரப் போற்றி மகிழ்ச்சி தெரிவித்து அரசுக்கு நற்சான்றிதழ் வழங்கிய பொதுப்பணித் துறைத் தலைமைப் பொறியாளர் CE (Bldgs) அவர்களுக்கும் நன்றி கலந்த வணக்கம் தெரிவித்தல் - கடமையாகிறது.

இதுமட்டுமல்ல, சிலை நிறுவும் தலைமை ஸ்தபதியோடு சேர்ந்து இப்பணியின் தொடக்கக்காலம் முதல் நாளது வரை ஆர்வத்தோடு தொழிற்கூடத்திற்குச் சென்றும், சேர்மானம் நிகழ்ந்திட்ட பாறைக்குச் சென்றும், மேற்பார்வையிட்டும், பண வரவு செலவுகளைக் கண்காணித்தும் ஸ்தபதிக்கு உறுதுணையாய்த் திகழ்ந்த சிலைப்பணியின் பொது மேலாளர் திரு. ஏ. இராமமூர்த்தி, B.Sc., B.E., அவர்களுக்கும் நன்றி தெரிவித்திடல் கடமையாகிறது. சென்னையில் தொழில்நுட்பக் கல்வி இயக்ககத்தில் இணை இயக்குநராகப் (Joint Director, Planning and Development) பணியாற்றி ஓய்வு பெற்ற பொறியாளர் இவர். தலைமை ஸ்தபதியானவர், மாமல்லபுர அரசினர் கட்டடக்கலை மற்றும் சிற்பக் கலைக் கல்லூரியின் முதல்வராய் இருந்தபோது அரசு செய்திட்ட பூம்புகார்க் கலைக் கூடங்கள், வள்ளுவர் கோட்டம், மதுரைத் தோரண வாயில்கள், சென்னையில் அண்ணாநகர்த் தோரண

வாயில், தஞ்சைப் பல்கலைக்கழகக் கட்டடங்கள், நுழைவாயில்கள் ஆகியவற்றைச் செய்துவரும்போது எல்லாப் பணிகளையும் இயக்ககத்தின் சார்பில் பார்வையிட்டு வெற்றிகரமாகச் செய்திட அனைத்து உதவிகளையும் செய்து கொடுத்தவர் இந்தப் பொறியாளர். இதனால் இவருக்கு ஸ்தபதியர் பணி நுட்பங்கள் நன்கு தெரியும். எனவே, அமைச்சர் நடத்திடும் கூட்டங்களுக்கு ஸ்தபதி இல்லா நேரங்களில் பொறுப்புடனும் தெளிவுடனும் பணி பற்றிய விளக்கம் கூறி அமைச்சர்களை மகிழ்வித்தவர் இவர். தமிழ்ப் பற்று மிக்க இவர் திருக்குறளைக் கற்றுத் தேர்ந்து அவ்வழி நடப்பவரும் ஆவார்.

மேலும், தொடக்கக் காலத்திலிருந்து இறுதிவரை இப் பணியில் ஸ்தபதியோடு நின்று - ஸ்தபதி செய்திட வேண்டிய பணிகளைப் பகிர்ந்து கொண்டு - சொந்தப் பணியாய் உளத்தே எண்ணி, இரவு பகல் பாராது, வெய்யில் மழைக்கு அஞ்சாது, உடல் சுகம் பேணாது, தொழிற்பட்டறையிலும், சேர்மானப் பாறையிலும் சிற்பியர்களோடு சிற்பியாய்ப் பணி செய்து, உழைப்பின் உச்சத்தையே எட்டிப் பார்த்திட்ட திரு. எஸ். ஷண்முக ஸ்தபதி நெஞ்சார்ந்த பாராட்டையும் வாழ்த்தையும் பெறுகிறார். இங்ஙனமே ஸ்தபதியோடு பல்வேறு பணிகளில் நீண்ட காலம் ஈடுபட்டு உழைத்தவரும் திறமைசாலியும் விசுவாசியுமாகிற ஸ்தபதி ஏ. சேகர், எல்லா நிலைகளிலும் திரு. ஷண்முக ஸ்தபதியோடு ஒத்து நின்று, வேலைகளைக் கண்காணித்துப் பணியாற்றிய இவர் ஒரு பட்டதாரி ஸ்தபதியுமாவார். இவ்விருவரும் தலைமை ஸ்தபதியின் மாணாக்கர்களுமாவர்.

இவர்களை விடுத்து இறுதிக்கட்டத்தில் வேலைகளைத் துரிதப்படுத்திடத் துணை ஸ்தபதிகளாகத் திரு. எம். சீனிவாசன், திரு. ஏ. சுவாமிநாதன் ஆகியோர் பணியாற்றினர். அவர்தம் ஒத்துழைப்பும், காட்டிய அக்கறையும், திறமையும், கண்காணிப்பும் பாராட்டுக்குரியன. இவர்களும் ஸ்தபதியின் மாணாக்கர்களே.

சிலைக்கான பெருங்கற்களைச் செதுக்கும் பணியில் ஈடுபடுத்தப்பட்ட திரு. எஸ். செல்லையா மற்றும் திரு.பி.ஆர். சொர்ணம் என்ற செட்டிநாட்டுச் சிற்பிகளும், மலையில் சேர்மானப் பணியை மேற்கொண்ட திரு.எஸ். சின்னக்கண்ணும் திரு. எம். சுடலையாண்டி ஆச்சாரியும், வியத்தகு சாரம் அமைத்துக் கொடுத்த இராமேஸ்வர நிமிந்த மேஸ்திரி, திரு. என். நாகராஜன், திரு.பி. நாகமுத்துவும், யானைச் சிற்பங்களைச் செய்திட்ட அம்பை

திரு. பிரமனாச்சாரி, திரு.வி. சுப்ரமணியனாச்சாரி மற்றும் யானைச் சிற்பங்களுக்குக் குறி போட்டு, மேற்பார்வையிட்டு வழிநடத்திய சிற்பக் கலைக் கல்லூரி முன்னாள் மாணாக்கர் திரு.எஸ். சந்தான கிருஷ்ணனும் நல்ல பாராட்டுக்களுக்கும் வாழ்த்துக்களுக்கும் உரியோர் ஆகிறார்கள்.

இறுதியாக, தலைப்பகுதியைத் தரையிலேயே சேர்மானம் செய்து, கண், மூக்கு, நெற்றி, புருவம், உதடு ஆகிய நுட்பப் பகுதிகளைச் சரிபார்த்து, மலையில் சேர்மானம் செய்தபின்னும் எல்லாவற்றையும் செம்மையாக்கிவிடும் பணியில் ஈடுபடுத்தப் பட்டவர் ஸ்தபதி திரு. எஸ். பெருமாள் ஆவார். இவர், ஸ்தபதியோடு பூம்புகார்க் கலைப்பணிகளிலும் அயல்நாட்டுச் சிற்பப் பணிகளிலும் இருபது வருடங்களுக்கு மேல் ஈடுபட்டு, திறமை பெற்று, இன்று கல்லால் சிற்பம் செதுக்குவதில் நிகரற்று விளங்குபவர். விசுவாசம் மிகுந்த இவருக்கும் ஸ்தபதியின் நல்வாழ்த்தும், பாராட்டும் உரியதாகின்றன.

சிற்ப இலக்கணக் கூறுகளை அடிப்படையாக வைத்து ஓவியம் வரைந்து, சிறியதொரு சிமிண்ட் மாடல் செய்து, அதனை மரத்திலே பிரதி செய்து, அப்பிரதியைக் கச்சிதமான அளவுக்குத் தனித்தனியே அடுக்குகளாக (layers) மண்சாந்து கொண்டு, செங்கல்லால் கட்டி, சிமிண்டினால் பூச்சுப் பூசி, அதனைத் துண்டு துண்டாக அறுத்து, அத் துண்டுகளைக் கற்களில் பிரதி செய்துகொள்ள ஸ்தபதி ஏற்படுத்திக் கொண்ட இத்தொழில் நுட்பம் (technique), கல் செதுக்கும் பணிக்கு உதவிகரமாய் இருந்தது. இந்த actual sized model-ஐ செங்கல்லிலே திறம்படச் செய்திட்ட ஸ்தபதி எஸ். நாகராஜன் மற்றும் மரத்தால் மாதிரி வடிவம் செதுக்கித் தந்த மாமல்லபுரக் கல்லூரி முன்னாள் மாணவர் திரு. முருகேசன், அவர்தம் துணைச் சிற்பிகள் ஆகிய அனைவரும் நெஞ்சார்ந்த பாராட்டுகளுக்கு உரியவராகின்றார்.

இச்சிலைக்கு மூலப்பொருளான கருங்கற்கள் அம்பாசமுத்திரத்துப் பாறையில் வெட்டிப் பெறுவதற்குப் பொறுப்பேற்று அதிகப்படியான கற்களை (4000 டன்) வழங்கிய அம்பை சிற்பி திரு. ஏ. ஆறுமுகம் ஆச்சாரியாருக்கும் பட்டுமலைக் குப்பம் சிறுதாமூர்ப் பாறையிலிருந்து கற்களை வெட்டித் தந்திட்ட மேஸ்திரிகளுக்கும் தொழிலாளர்களுக்கும் பாராட்டுக்கள் இங்கே பதியப்படுகின்றன.

சிலைக்கற்களின் இணைப்புகளை sulphur resistant சிமெண்டு கொண்டு மூடியதோடு, முக்கியமான இணைப்புக் களையும், தலைப் பகுதிகளையும் epoxite கொண்டு grouting மற்றும் sealing செய்து செவ்வனே முடித்துக் கொடுத்த சென்னை, S.I.P. Industries Ltd. நிறுவனத்தாருக்கும், நேரடிக் கண்காணிப்புச் செய்திட்ட டாக்டர் எஸ். குணசேகரன் (Chemist) மற்றும் பொறியாளர் திரு.டி. அசோகன் அவர்களுக்கும் பாராட்டும் நன்றியும் தெரிவிக்கலாகிறது.

கட்டுரையாளராகிய இச்சிலை நிர்மாணத் தலைமை ஸ்தபதி, 1957லிருந்து 1999 முடிய 42 ஆண்டுக்காலமாக எண்ணற்ற பணிகளை இந்தியாவிலும், மேலை நாடுகளிலும் செய்திட்ட காலை இவர்க்கு வாய்த்திட்ட தலைவர்கள் அனைவரும் தத்தம் நிலையில் மிகப் பெரியவர்களாகவே இருந்திருக்கிறார்கள். இவர்தம் முன்னோர்களான ஸ்தபதியரில் பெரும்பாலோர் நாடாண்ட மன்னர்கள் ஆதரவிலேயே பணியாற்றி வந்திருக்கிறார்கள். குறிப்பாகத் தொடக்கக் காலத்தில் இராசராச சோழன் தலைமையிலும், கடைசிக் காலத்தில் சிவகங்கைச் சீமையை ஆண்ட சின்னமருது, பெரிய மருது (இருவரும் அண்ணன் தம்பிகள்) ஆகியோர் தலைமையிலும் புகழ் வாய்ந்த காளையார் கோயில் கோபுரத்தைப் பழம்பதி, பெரிய நாயகம் என்ற சிற்பக் கலை வல்லுநர்கள் (இருவரும் அண்ணன் தம்பிகள்) செய்து சிற்பியர்தம் வரலாற்றில் இடம் பெற்றுள்ளார்கள். அவர்தம் பணிகளைச் செய்துவரும் போதே மன்னர்களின் அன்பையும், மதிப்பையும், ஆதரவையும் பெற்று வந்ததினால் அவரவர் பணிகள் சிறப்புற அமைவதாயின.

இப்படித்தான் டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்களின் தலைமையில் வள்ளுவர் கோட்டமும், பூம்புகார்ச் சிலப்பதிகார மன்றங்களும், மாதவிச் சிற்பமும், பாஞ்சாலங்குறிச்சியில் கட்டபொம்மன் சிலையும், காரைக்குடியில் தமிழ்த்தாய்க் கோயிலும், தமிழ்த்தாய் உருவமும் சிறப்புற அமைந்தன. மேடையில் பாடும் பாடகருக்கு எதிரே அமர்ந்துள்ள பிறிதொரு பாடகரால் ஆக்க உணர்ச்சி (inspiration and creative effort) மேலோங்கி எழுவது போல, டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்கள் ஆக்கமிகு உணர்ச்சியை ஸ்தபதியிடம் தோற்றுவித்தவர்களாவார்கள். இதனால் அரசும் ஸ்தபதியும் பெருமையடைவதாயினர். எனவே, ஸ்தபதிக்கு ஆக்க உணர்ச்சியூட்டிய டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்களுக்கும் நெஞ்சார்ந்த நன்றிப் பெருக்கைப் புலப்படுத்துதல் கடமையாகிறது.

இச்சிலையைச் செய்துவரும் நேரத்தில் ஸ்தபதிக்கு நேரடித் தொடர்பாய்க் கிடைத்திட்ட செய்தி மற்றும் விளம்பரத்துறை அமைச்சர் மாண்புமிகு வ. முல்லைவேந்தன் அவர்கள் இப்பணியில் கொண்ட அக்கறையின் அளவை மதிப்பிட்டுச் சொல்ல இயலாது. இப்படியொரு அமைச்சர் இப்பணிக்கு உகந்தவர் என்பதைத் தேர்வு செய்த மாண்புமிகு தமிழக முதல்வர் அவர்கள்தான் முதலில் பாராட்டுக்குரியவர்களாகிறார்கள். ஸ்தபதியைத் தனது நண்பராகவும், உடன்பிறந்தோனாகவும் நடத்தி, அன்பு காட்டி, வேலையையும் கடுமையாக வாங்கி, வெற்றி கண்ட திறமை மிகுந்த அமைச்சராக இருந்ததைப் பெருமையோடு இத்தருணம் சொல்லி ஸ்தபதியின் நெஞ்சார்ந்த நன்றியறிதல் மாண்புமிகு செய்தி மற்றும் விளம்பரத்துறை அமைச்சர் அவர்களுக்குப் புலப்படுத்தலாகிறது.

இச்சிலை செய்திடும் நேரத்தில் செய்தி விளம்பரத் துறையை நிர்வகித்த அனைத்து அரசுச் செயலாளர்களும், அனைத்து இயக்குநர்களும், அவர்தம் துறை அரசுப் பணியாளர்களும், எல்லாக் கட்டங்களிலும் ஸ்தபதிக்குச் செய்து வந்த உதவிகள், காட்டிய ஆதரவுகள் இச்சிலைப் பணியின் வெற்றிக்குக் காரணமாயிருந்தன என்றால் மிகையாகாது. அவர்களையும் இந்த நல்ல நேரத்தில் நினைத்து நன்றி சொல்லல் கடமையாகிறது.

தமிழ்நாடு அரசுத் தலைமைச் செயலகத்திற்குச் சென்று வரும் போதெல்லாம் ஆர்வமிகு அதிகாரிகள் ஸ்தபதியிடம் சிலைப் பணியின் முன்னேற்றத்தைக் கேட்டுக் கேட்டு எல்லையில்லா மகிழ்ச்சி கொண்டதை உற்றுநோக்கும்போது தமிழக அரசு அதிகாரிகள் அனைவரும் போற்றும் பணியாக இச்சிலை நிறுவும் பணி இருந்ததென்பது தெளிவாயிற்று. எனவே, அவர்தம் ஆர்வம் மெச்சுதலுக்குள்ளாகிறது.

வள்ளுவர் சிலை சேர்மானப் பணி தொடங்கிய காலத் திலிருந்து நாளது வரை இப்பணியின் மீது அளவிலா ஆர்வங் கொண்டு பார்வையிட வரும் மாண்புமிகு அமைச்சர்களிடமும், கட்டுமானக் கழக இயக்குநரிடமும், ஸ்தபதியிடமும் குறுக்கிலும் நெடுக்கிலுமான கேள்விகளைக் கேட்டு, பணிபற்றிய வளர்ச்சியைப் புள்ளி விவரங்களோடு திரட்டி, பொதுமக்களுக்குத் தெரிய வேண்டிய முன்பின் செய்திகளையும் சேர்த்து, நல்ல தமிழில் போட்டி போட்டுக்கொண்டு தத்தம் செய்தித்தாள்கள் மூலம் வெளிப்படுத்தியதால் இச்சிலை நிர்மாணப் பணியின் அன்றாட

வளர்ச்சி பற்றிய செய்திகள் அனைத்தும் தமிழகத்தின் பட்டி தொட்டிகளுக்கும் பரவிட நேர்ந்துள்ளன. வள்ளுவர் சிலைப் பணி பற்றிய செய்தி வராத நாளே இல்லையெனலாம். ஒரே நாளில் ஒரே இதழில் மூன்று இடங்களில் செய்திகள் இடம்பெற்றது முண்டு. குமரி மாவட்டச் செய்தியாளர்களும், நாகர்கோவில் P.T.I. நிருபர் திரு. எஸ். ரங்கநாதன் அவர்களும், அவரது துணை நிருபர்களும் காட்டிய ஆர்வம், சுறுசுறுப்பு மலைமீது பணியாற்றிய சிற்பிகளுக்கு ஊக்கமளிக்கும் 'டானிக்'காக இருந்தது என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தகுந்ததாகும். எனவே, இப்பணியின் வெற்றியில் அவர்களுக்கும் சிறிது பங்களிக்கலாம். திறப்பு விழாவையொட்டிப் பல மலர்களும் வரவிருப்பதால் அம்மலர் மாலைகளை வள்ளுவர்க்குச் சூட்டி மகிழ்வார்கள் என்று எதிர்பார்க்கலாம். அத்தகு நண்பர்களுக்குப் பாராட்டும் நன்றியும் தெரிவிப்பது மிகப் பொருத்தமாகுமெனக் கருதலாகிறது.

சிலை நிர்மாணப் பணியின்போது மாதம் மூன்று முறை சிலைப்பணி வளர்ச்சி பற்றி ஸ்தபதியோடும், ஸ்தபதியின் பிரதிநிதியோடும் உரையாடி, அவ்வப்போது சேர்மானப் பணிகளை மலைக்குச் சென்று பார்த்துப் பணியாற்றும் ஸ்தபதிகளோடும் சிற்பிகளோடும் நேரில் கலந்து உரையாடி உற்சாகமூட்டியவரும், அறப்பீடத்தின் மீது திருவள்ளுவர் பாதத்தைப் பதிய வைத்த நாளிலும், சிலையின் தலைப்பகுதியை மூடிய நாளிலும், ஸ்தபதியரோடு இருந்து, அந்தப் புனித நிகழ்ச்சிகளுக்குத் தலைமை தாங்கி, அந்நிகழ்ச்சிகளைப் பெருமைப்படுத்தியவரும் ஆகிய கன்னியாகுமரி மாவட்ட ஆட்சித்தலைவர் திரு. வி. பாண்டியன், இ.ஆ.ப. அவர்களுக்கு வணக்கம் கூறல் கடமையாகிறது.

ஆயிரம் ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்னர்த் தஞ்சைப் பேரரசனாம் இராசராச சோழன் முற்றிலும் துண்டுக் கற்களைக் கொண்டு 216 அடி உயரங் கொண்ட மேரு எனப்படும் வியத்தகு விமானம் ஒன்றை நிறுவினான். கற்சின்னங்களே காலத்தைக் கடந்து நிற்கும் இயல்பின என்பதை உற்றறிந்து இப்படிச் செய்தனன் இராஜராஜன். இப்பணியின் சிறப்பு, வரலாற்று ஏடுகளில் இன்றும் ஒளிர்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறது. யுனெஸ்கோ (UNESCO) நிறுவனம் இதனை World heritage என்ற பட்டியலில் இடம்பெறச் செய்து அனைத்துலக மக்களின் கவனத்தையும் ஈர்த்திடச் செய்திருக்கிறது.

இந்த விமானத்திற்கு முன்னும் பின்னும் கட்டுமானக் கோவில்கள் (structural temples) இந்திய நாட்டில் பல எழுந்துள்ளன.

திருவள்ளுவர் சிலையினைக் கட்டி முடிக்கும்பேறு பெற்ற இக் கட்டுரையாளர் புதுடில்லியில் முற்றிலும் கற்களால் கருவறையும் விமானமும் கட்டி மத்திய அரசின் விருதும் பெற்றுள்ளார். இப்போது ஹவாய்த்தீவில் (USA) அமெரிக்க சுவாமி ஒருவருக்குப் பிரம்மாண்டமான சிவன் கோவில் ஒன்றை முற்றிலும் கல்லால் கட்டி வருகிறார்; முடியும் தறுவாயில் இருக்கும் இப்பணி அமெரிக்காவிலேயே எழுச்சி பெற்று வரும் கருவறை, விமானம், கோபுரம், ஸ்தூபிகள் உள்பட முற்றிலும் கல்லால் ஆன கற்கோவில் ஆகிறது. என்றாலும் 133 அடி உயரங்கொண்ட திருவள்ளுவர் சிலைபோலக் கருத்தாழமுள்ள - முற்றிலும் கல்லால் ஆன கட்டுமான நுட்பங்கள் செறிந்த சிலையாக - எங்கணும் எவரும் கண்டதில்லை, கேட்டதுமில்லை, நினைத்துப் பார்த்ததுமில்லை. வெற்றி கண்ட இப்பணி, சிற்பக்கலை மரபுக்கு மேலுமொரு அணியாகத் திகழும் என்பதில் ஐயமில்லை.

கலைகளையும், கலைகளின் சிறப்புக்களையும், தொன்மையையும், உயர்வையும் பேசிடத்தக்கோர் நம் நாட்டில் ஏராளமாக இருப்பினும், கலைசார்ந்த பண்பாட்டுச் சின்னமாகப் பெரிய எடுப்புக்களைக் கல்லால் செய்திடத் தக்கோர் இன்று குறைவே எனலாம். மேலும், இத்தகைய பணியைச் செய்திட எவர்க்கும் ஆசை இருக்கலாம். வாய்ப்புமிருக்கலாம். ஆனால் எதைச் செய்திட வேண்டுமென்ற உணர்வும், உறுதியும் அதற்குரிய துணிச்சலும் அதனால் ஏற்படும் வெற்றி மீது நம்பிக்கையும் கொண்டோர் அரிதினும் அரிதே. அத்தகைய துணிச்சலைத் தஞ்சைப் பேரரசன் இராசராச சோழனிடம் அன்று கண்ட சிற்பக் கலை மரபு இன்று, 1000 ஆண்டுகளுக்குப் பிறகு தமிழக முதல்வர் டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்களிடம் தான் காண்கிறது என்றால் மிகையன்று. இது முகமனும் அன்று. இத்துணிச்சல் மற்றும் அஞ்சாநெஞ்சம் டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்களுக்கே உரித்தான - இயல்பாய் வாய்த்திட்ட - ஒரு சிறப்புப் பண்பாகும்.

இராசராசன் தமது படைப்பினால் சைவ சமயத்தை வானுயர உயர்த்தி வைத்தான். டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்களோ, தமது படைப்பினால் தமிழனுடைய சிறந்த பண்பாட்டை - வள்ளுவர் - வள்ளுவர் காட்டிய திருநெறியை - இன்று வானுயர ஏற்றி வைத்துள்ளார்கள் என்றால் இதுவும் மிகையன்று. அன்னாரது பேச்சிலும் மூச்சிலும் தமிழும் தமிழ்ப் பண்பாடும் தானே எதையும் மிஞ்சி நிற்கின்றன.

இறுதியாக, ஆயிரம் ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்னர்ச் சிற்பக்கலை மரபு - சிற்பியர் தம் கலை ஆற்றல் - எத்தகைய ஏற்றம் கொண்டு விளங்கிற்று என்பதை இராசராசன் தமது படைப்பின் மூலம் சுட்டிக்காட்டி அவர்களுக்கும் வரலாற்றில் இடமளித்தாரோ அதுபோல இக்காலச் சிற்பக்கலை மரபும் சிற்பியர் கலை ஆற்றலும் அன்று போல் இன்றும் ஓங்கி நிற்கின்றன என்பதை டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்களின் படைப்பானது உலக மாந்தர்க்குச் சுட்டிக் காட்டி, அவர்தம் பணியைப் பெருமைப்படுத்தி, அவர்களையும் வரலாற்றில் ஏற்றி வைத்துள்ளார்கள் என்று துணிந்து கூறலாம். இந்த நேரத்தில் சிற்பியர் இனமே அவர்களுக்குப் பாராட்டுக் களையும் நன்றியறிதலையும் புலப்படுத்திக் கொள்கிறது.

இரண்டாயிரமாவது ஆண்டு பிறந்திட்ட இந்த நேரத்தி லிருந்து சிற்பியர்களுக்கு நல்லதொரு ஏற்றமும் வாழ்க்கையில் உயர் நலமும், சிறப்பும் கிடைக்குமென்று நம்பலாம். இதற்கு நல்லதொரு அடித்தளம் அமைத்துக் கொடுத்தவர் டாக்டர் கலைஞர் அவர்கள் என்று கூறி அவர்தம் பெயரையும் புகழையும் நன்றியுணர்வோடு காப்போமாக!

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